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Mr. GODFREY HIGGINS'
APOLOGY FOR MOHAMED

[*A Verbatim Reprint*]

EDITED,
WITH INTRODUCTION, CRITICAL NOTES,
APPENDICES, AND A CHAPTER ON ISLAM,
BY MIRZA ABU'L-FAZL

My Lord ! was I aught but a mortal apostle ?
—Koran, S. 17. 93.

ALLAHABAD
REFORM SOCIETY
DARYABAD
1929

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Title of the Original Book:
**AN APOLOGY FOR THE LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF THE
CELEBRATED PROPHET OF ARABIA,
CALLED
MOHAMED
OR
THE ILLUSTRIOUS.
BY GODFREY HIGGINS, Esq.**

LONDON:

ROWLAND HUNTER, 72, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD; HURST,
CHANCE, AND CO., ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD; AND RIDGE-
WAY AND SONS, PICCADILLY. 1829.

G. SMALLFIELD, PRINTER, HACKNEY.

TO
SIR THOMAS W. ARNOLD,
C.I.E., LITT.D., M.A.,
Author of "The Preaching of Islam,"
THIS LITTLE EDITION
OF
MR. GODFREY HIGGINS'
"APOLOGY FOR MOHAMED"
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,
IN HUMBLE RECOGNITION OF THE DEEP DEBT OF GRATITUDE
UNDER WHICH HE HAS LAID THE ISLAMIC WORLD
BY HIS PATIENT AND INDEPENDENT
RESEARCHES INTO THE HISTORY
OF THE SPREAD OF ISLAM,
BY THE EDITOR.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

OF all the great teachers who have from time to time appeared in the history of the world none has achieved the glories of "the Great Arabian," in giving to the people a religion that has held, and will continue to hold, its own against all opposition. And yet none has been more unworthily maligned than him by the designing ecclesiastics of opposing churches.

The present work is a *verbatim* reprint of Mr. Godfrey Higgins' celebrated *Apology*, published in London in 1829. I have thought fit, in some cases, to furnish subject-headings to paragraphs, and to add critical notes where necessary. These have been marked with superior alphabets to distinguish them from the author's notes which have been marked with superior numerals. I am only sorry I had no Hebrew or Greek types to use like as in the Original and instead thereof have transliterated the same. Appen-

dices II to V, a Chapter on Islam, and "Christianity and Islam: a Comparative Sketch," are additions; which, it is hoped, will help in the study of the subject. The whole has been prefaced by an Introduction in which I have attempted to present, in outline, the life of Mohammed in the words of the latest authorities on the subject in English —Dr. Lane-Poole, the Rev. Bosworth-Smith, and Sir William Muir; to all of whom I am indebted, and especially to Dr. Lane-Poole, from whose learned *Introduction* to Mr. E. W. Lane's *Selections from the Kur-an*, I have made some of the lengthiest extracts. It is a misfortune that this learned work is now long since out of print. The modern world is under a deep debt of obligation to the labours of Dr. Lane-Poole and the Rev. Bosworth-Smith, for their truly Christian endeavours to bring about an understanding between the two great sister-religions, whose mission it was certainly not to spread hatred, but to further the Cause of love and concord among

mankind under the inspiring influences of their respective World-teachers.

The object of this brochure will have been amply secured if it could convey to any listening mind the greatness of the character of him who reigns over the minds of his followers by the mere force of his character and the love that such a nature inspires, and through him of the message which was the marrow of his being.

In conclusion, I have to express my heartfelt thanks to my kind friends, Judge S. M. Saiduddin, Professor M. Naimur-Rahman, M. Syed Sakhawat Ali, and M. Abdu'r-Rashid, for their voluntary assistance in raising a Fund to aid in the publication of my unpublished works. I have also to thank Sir Abdu'r-Rauf for certain valuable books of reference which he has presented to the Reform Society.

M. ABU'L-FAZL.

Reform Society,
Allahabad,
January, 1929.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Judge S. M. Saidu'ddin ...	200
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MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

GODFREY HIGGINS (1773-1833), archæologist, only son of Godfrey Higgins of Skellow Grange, near Doncaster, West Riding of Yorkshire, by his wife Christiana (Mattersen), was born on (or shortly before) 1 May 1773. On his father's death he succeeded to a considerable estate, and married (1800). In 1802, during the scare of an anticipated invasion by Napoleon, he became a major in the 3rd West York militia, and while in this service he was seized with a bad fever at Harwich, from the effects of which he never recovered. Resigning his commission about 1813, he devoted himself entirely to an unbiassed investigation into the history of religious beliefs. He acquired a knowledge of Hebrew, and sometimes pursued his studies in foreign libraries. At the date of his death he had projected a journey to Egypt, 'and perhaps Samarcand,' in search of further clues to religious problems.

Higgins acted with energy as a justice of the peace, and was keenly interested in practical questions of political economy. He took part in measures for the better treatment of the insane, and was the means of erecting a house for pauper lunatics near Wakefield. He favoured the abolition of corn-laws and game-laws, and as early as 1832 advocated the dis-establishment of the Irish church. In 1831 several of the radical political unions of Yorkshire were anxious to elect him to parliament; he pledged himself to serve it if elected, but declined to come forward as a candidate.

Higgins attended the meeting of the British Association at Cambridge in June 1833, returned home out of health, and died at his Yorkshire residence at Skellow Grange on 9 Aug. 1833. His London house was 20 Keppel Street, Russell Square. He married in 1800 Jane (d. 18 May 1822 at Bath), heiress of Richard Thorpe, and left a son, Godfrey, and a daughter, Jane (married to Lieutenant-general Matthew Sharpe of Haddam Castle, Northumber-

land). Another daughter, Catherine, died before him unmarried. Higgins was a free-mason, a fellow of the Society of Arts, the Royal Asiatic Society, and other learned bodies.

Among his social and political publications are the following: 1. 'Letter to ... Earl Fitzwilliam,' &c. [York, 1814], 8vo (on lunatic asylums). 2. 'The Evidence ... respecting the Asylum at York,' &c., Doncaster, 1816, 8vo. 3. 'Address to the Electors of the West Riding,' &c., Hackney [1817], 8vo; 2nd edit., Doncaster, 1833, 8vo. 4. 'A Letter to the House of Commons on the... discontent of the British Empire,' &c., 1819, 8vo (written from Geneva on the passing of the Metallic Currency Bill). 5. 'Observations on ... the Corn Laws,' &c., 1826, 8vo (reprinted in 'The Pamphleteer,' vol. xxvii.) 6. 'A Letter to the Political Unions,' &c., Hackney [1833], 8vo. 7. 'A Second Letter,' &c., Hackney [1833], 8vo.

His contributions to the archæology of religion are the following: I. 'Horæ Sabbaticæ, or an Attempt to correct ...

errors respecting the Sabbath,' &c., 1826, 8vo (two parts in one); 2nd edit., with appendix, 1833, 8vo; 3rd edit., with autobiography, 1851, 8vo. His positions were attacked by Henry Standish and by T. S. Hughes, B. D. 2. 'An Apology for... Mohammed,' &c., 1829, 8vo. This was criticised by Edward Upham, author of the 'History of Buddhism.' 3. 'The Celtic Druids,' &c., 1829, 4to; his most important work, containing 'a most valuable collection of prints' (HUNTER). 4. 'Anacalypsis, an Attempt to draw aside the veil of the Saitic Isis; or, an Inquiry into the Origin of Languages, Nations, and Religions,' &c., 1836, 4to, 2 volumes; another edition, Glasgow, 1878, 8vo. The first volume, though not published till 1836, was printed off in June 1833; four sheets of the second volume were revised by the author, at whose son's expense the remainder was edited by George Smallfield. The 'Celtic Druids' was designed as an introduction to this work, which is coloured by Higgins' researches into phallic worship. He had intended 'to exhibit in a future

book the Christianity of Jesus Christ from his own mouth.' He claimed to be a Christian, regarding our Lord as a Nazarite, of the monastic order of Pythagorean Essenes, probably a Samaritan by birth, and leading the life of a hermit.

[Autobiography in Horæ Sabbaticæ, 1851; prefaces to Anacalypsis, and autobiographical references in other works; Gent. Mag. October, 1833, p. 371.]

A. G.¹

¹ Taken from the *Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Leslie Stephen and Sydney Lee; vol. xxvi. pp. 368, 369. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1891.

TO
THE NOBLEMEN AND GENTLEMEN
OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND IRELAND.

To you, my Lords and Gentlemen, I take the liberty of dedicating this small Tract, because I am desirous of correcting what appear to me to be the erroneous opinions which some of the individuals of your Society (as well as others of my countrymen) entertain respecting the religion of many millions of the inhabitants of the Oriental Countries, about the welfare of whom you meritoriously interest yourselves; and, because a right understanding of their religion, by you, is of the first importance to their welfare. I do it without the knowledge or approbation of the Society, or of any of its Members, in order that they may not be implicated in my sentiments.

With the most sincere wishes for the welfare of the Society, and with great respect,

I remain, my Lords and Gentlemen,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
GODFREY HIGGINS,
M. ASIAT. SOC.

SKELLOW GRANGE, NEAR DONCASTER,
July, 1829.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE object of the following Essay is to abate the mischievous spirit of intolerance which has hitherto existed between the followers of Jesus and those of Mohamed, by shewing that the religions of both, however unfortunately changed by time, are the same in their original foundation and principle. If the author should succeed in the slightest degree in exciting or increasing a brotherly feeling towards the professors of the Mohamedan faith, so many millions of whom are our fellow-subjects, he will be amply rewarded.

"Mr. Crips, alighting from his horse, killed a serpent which was crossing the way; carrying it to the ambassador, who was seated in his Arabah, he received a mild but pointed reproof against the wantonness of depriving an animal unnecessarily of life. '*Bey Zadeh,*' said he, 'had that poor serpent done any thing

to injure you? Are you the happier because you have deprived it of life? Do not carry with you a proof of your cruelty; it may be unlucky: the same God who made you created also the serpent; and surely there was room enough in this wilderness for both of you!' " ¹

¹ Clarke's Travels, Vol. IV. p. 544, 4to.

[Speaking of the stray dogs in Constantinople, M. Uobicini says: "Hunted away by the Europeans, great numbers have retreated into the remotest quarters of the city. There they still find some charitable souls who distribute food to them every morning, assist the females when whelping, save the puppies from perishing with cold during the winter, and even carry their humanity so far as, in their last moments, to bequeath them a legacy for their support." (*La Turquie Actuelle*, p. 78.)

"To all the brute creation," writes Miss Pardoe (*City of the Sultan*), "the Turks are not only merciful, but ministering friends; and to so great an extent do they carry this kindness towards the inferior animals that they will not kill an unweaned lamb, in order to spare unnecessary suffering to the mother; and an English sportsman, who had been unsuccessful in the chase, on one occasion, in firing off his piece previously to disembarking from his caique, brought down a gull that was sailing above his head, was reproached by his rowers with as much horror and emphasis as though he had been guilty of homicide." —ED.]

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Loving to thy kinsfolk, kind to thy neighbours, charitable to the poor, hospitable to the stranger, faithful to thy word, and ever a defender of truth and justice.—*His wife Khadijah* (after her 15 years of wedded life with him).

. . . God has raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty and purity, we are aware.—*Jaafar* (before the King of Abyssinia).

He is al-Amin (the Trusty) of the Koreish, and as-Siddiq (the True) of the Arabs, and he unites in his person all virtues.—*Abu-Talib* (on his death-bed).

Mohammed is universally known amongst us as al-Amin (the Trusty).—*Abu-Sufyan* (while yet a mortal enemy of Mohammed, before the Byzantine Emperor).

The Prophet was more modest than a virgin in her closet.—*Ayeshah* (his virgin wife, after her twelve years of wedded life with him).

My father and mother be his sacrifice! I never saw a teacher, either before or after him, who taught in a kindlier sort than the Prophet. By God! he never looked severe, nor chastised, nor reviled.—*Muawiyah b. al-Hikam*.

Ten years was I about the Prophet and he never said as much as ‘Uff’ to me.—*Anas* (his servant).

The character of Mohammed is the Koran.—*Ayeshah* (Mohammed’s wife who survived him).

INTRODUCTION

I say not to you, I have with me the treasures of God, nor that I know the unseen; nor do I say to you, I am an angel; I follow only that which is revealed to me.¹

Such is the open confession of the man for whom an Apology was needed in English, which an hundred years ago Mr. Godfrey Higgins wrote.

It will not be my part here to give in detail an account of the life and work of “the Great Arabian,” as it may be read elsewhere. I will, however, touch upon some salient points in his life which may help in forming a right estimate of his character.

MOHAMMED was born at Mecca, about the 29th of August 570 A. C., the same year which saw the destruction of the Abyssinian invaders, and which formed

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an epoch in the history of Arabia, and which was destined to create a yet greater epoch in the history of the world. He was descended from the valiant and illustrious tribe of the Koreish, the most noted of all the Arabians.

His father Abdullah died some days before his birth; his mother Aminah was weak and sickly, and put him out to nurse with Halimah, a Bedouin woman of the tribe of Saad, with whom he remained till five years old. The constitution of Mohammed grew robust, and his character free and independent by this sojourn among the Saads. "At any rate, his speech was thus formed upon one of the purest models of the beautiful language of the Peninsula."

His mother died when he was only six years of age. His grand-father Abdul-Muttalib took charge of the orphan, and on his death-bed—three years later—committed him to the care of his uncle Abu-Talib.

When in his tenth year, he tended the sheep and goats of his people upon

the neighbouring hills and valleys at Kararit, near Ajyad. "And doubtless it was then that he developed that reflective disposition of mind which at length led him to seek the reform of his people, whilst in his solitary wanderings with the sheep he gained that marvellous eye for the beauty and wonder of the earth and sky which resulted in the gorgeous nature-painting of the Kur-án."

When Mohammed was twelve years of age his uncle took him on a mercantile journey to Syria. The expedition extended to Bosra, or even farther, and lasted for several months, affording to the youthful mind opportunities of observation. During one of the halts, he is said to have talked to a Christian monk, named Buhairah, who had his monastery at a village named Kefer, six miles from Bosra, and to have greatly impressed him.

He passed near to Petra, Jerash, Amman, and other centres of former mercantile grandeur; he passed the valley of al-Hijr and by the Dead Sea; he passed

through several Jewish settlements, and came in contact with the Christians of Syria, and witnessed their national and social customs, the churches with their crosses and images, their pictures and other symbols of the faith.

At the age of twenty he witnessed the last of the most destructive wars that ever were waged in pre-Islamic Arabia—the Sacrilegious Wars; and many a time had frequented the “Olympia of Arabia,” as the Fair at Ukaz has rightly been called.

“Our authorities,” says Sir William Muir, “all agree in ascribing to the youth of Mohammad a modesty of deportment and purity of manners rare among the people of Mecca. . . . Endowed with a refined mind and delicate taste, reserved and meditative, he lived much within himself, and the ponderings of his heart no doubt supplied occupation for leisure hours spent by others of a lower stamp in rude sports and profligacy. The fair character and honourable bearing of the unobtrusive youth won the

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approbation of his fellow-citizens; and he received the title, by common consent, of Al-Amin, 'the Faithful.'

About this time, Abu-Talib bethought himself of setting his nephew to earn a livelihood for himself. "Mohammad was never covetous of wealth, or at any period of his career energetic in the pursuit of riches for their own sake. If left to himself, he would probably have preferred the quiet and repose of his present life to the bustle and cares of a mercantile journey. He would not spontaneously have contemplated such an expedition. But when the proposal was made, his generous soul at once felt the necessity of doing all that was possible to relieve his uncle, and he cheerfully responded to the call."¹

He entered into the service of Khadijah as her chief mercantile agent to Syria, and prepared for the journey. The caravan took the usual route to Syria, and reached Bosra, on the road

¹Muir.

to Damascus. “The transactions of that busy mart, where the practised merchants of Syria sought to over-reach the simple Arabs, were ill suited to the tastes and habits of Mohammad;” yet his natural sagacity and straightforward character carried him prosperously through the undertaking.

“The reflective mind of Mohammad, now arrived at the mature but still inquisitive period of early manhood, must have received deep and abiding impressions from all that he saw and heard upon the journey, and during his stay at Bosra.” The story of his interview with the monk Nestorius about this time proves that Mohammed lost no opportunity of inquiring into the practices and tenets of the Syrian Christians or of conversing with the monks and clergy who fell in his way.

With all this, he had taken so kindly to the duty, which involved responsibilities, and acquitted himself so worthily, that he attracted the notice of the employer, who, on his return to Mecca,

offered him her hand in marriage. The comely widow was now forty years of age, she had been twice married, and had borne two sons and a daughter; and though Mohammed was only twenty-five, the marriage proved a singularly happy one, and brought him that repose and exemption from daily toil which he needed in order to prepare his mind for his great work. But above all, it brought him a true woman's heart that was ever ready to encourage him in his strivings for everything pure and good.

His prominent part in the revival of the old Jurhamite league of the Hilf-ul-Fudul to protect the weak and the oppressed among the strangers who visited Mecca; his defeating the wicked design of the Byzantine Court through Othman, son of Huweirith (a Christian Arab backed by Byzantine gold) to wrest Mecca from the hands of the Arabs; thus saving the city of his birth from a foreign yoke; his acting with wise tact and judgment as arbitrator in a dispute among the leading families of Mecca on the

occasion of the rebuilding of the Kāabah, which almost threatened to plunge the tribes into another of their ever-recurring wars; his relieving his uncle Abu-Talib of the charge of his son Ali, and his freeing the captive Zeid; and last but not the least, his lonely wanderings about the hills and dales, his broodings over the subjects of his study, his passion for solitude, and his abode for months together in the dismal cave of Mount Hira, where he betook himself for purposes of pious meditation;¹—these are the only noteworthy external incidents of the next fifteen years of Mohammed's life. “We know very little about what Mohammed did, but we hear only one voice as to what he was. Up to the age of forty his unpretending modest way of life had attracted but little notice from his townspeople. He was only known as a

¹ “Who can doubt the earnestness of that search after truth and the living God, that drove the affluent merchant from his comfortable home and his fond wife, to make his abode for months at a time in the dismal cave of Mount Hira?”—Rev. Dr. Dods, *Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ*, pp. 17, 18.

simple upright man, whose life was severely pure and refined, and whose true desert sense of honour and faith-keeping had won him the high title of El-Emeen, 'the Trusty.' "¹

This man, at the age of forty, feels himself called to take up a mighty message: it had long been a burden he bore, but now had come the guidance. "If we respect the shrinking of Isaiah or Jeremiah from the heavy task of proclaiming unwelcome truth, we must also respect the keen sensitiveness of Mohammed, who was so burdened by this same responsibility, and so persuaded of his incompetency for the task, that at times he thought his new feelings and thoughts were a snare of the Devil, and at times he would fain have rid himself of all further struggle by casting himself from a friendly precipice."²

The crisis had come, and Mohammed was to proclaim the message even

¹ Lane-Poole.

² Dods, *Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ*, pp. 17, 18.

as the prophets of old had done.

Cry ! in the name of ¹ thy Lord who created—
Created man out of affection.
Cry ! for thy Lord is the Most Beneficent,
Who taught the [use of] Pen,
Taught man what he knew not.²

These were the first words that spoke into his soul. Trembling and agitated, Mohammed tottered to Khadijah and told her his agony of mind. He had always hated and despised soothsayers, and now, in the irony of destiny, it would appear that he was going to become a soothsayer himself. "Fear not," exclaimed Khadijah, "God will surely not let such a thing happen to thee—thou who hast been loving to thy kinsfolk, kind to thy neighbours, charitable to the poor, hospitable to the stranger, faithful to thy word, and ever a defender of truth and justice."

Once more the inspiration of Heaven falls upon the anxious mind—

O thou upon whom has fallen the mantle ³ !

¹ Or, by the command of.

² Koran, S. 96. 1-5.

³ Of the prophets.

Rise up, and warn,
 And thy Lord magnify,
 And thy heart¹ purify,
 And abomination shun,
 And lay no obligation for that thou doest much;
 But, for thy Lord's sake, work thou patiently.²

Mohammed now stood forth as the Apostle of God to his people. He told them of their evil ways, their sunken condition; he told them how they should rise and act as the true servants of God. "He was in the minority of one, but he was no longer afraid; he had learnt that self-trust which is the condition of all true work." At first he spoke to his near kinsmen and friends; and "it is impossible to over-rate the importance of the fact that his closest relations and those who lived under his roof were the first to believe and the staunchest of faith. The prophet who is *with* honour in his own home need appeal to no stronger proof of his sincerity, and that Mohammad *was* 'a hero to his own valet'

Ar. *thiyâba*. Cf. S. 11. 5.

¹ Koran, S. 74. 1-7.

is an invincible argument for his earnestness.”¹

His first converts were his wife, and his cousin Ali, his freedman Zeid, his friend Abu-Bakr, and a few others. “It is strongly corroborative,” says Muir, “of Mohammad’s sincerity that the earliest converts to Islam were not only of upright character, but his own bosom friends and people of his household; who, intimately acquainted with his private life, could not fail otherwise to have detected those discrepancies which ever more or less exist between the professions of the hypocritical deceiver abroad and his actions at home.”

Three years of unwearied effort produced the pitiful result of a score or so of converts, mainly from the poorest classes. He now appealed publicly and boldly to the Koreish, but they turned to him a deaf ear. They mocked at him, they reviled him. But from this time he ceased not to preach. The

Koreish were now thoroughly alarmed; Mohammed's preaching betokened a serious revolutionary movement. In preaching the Unity of God, he was attacking the very existence of the idols, in the guardianship of which consisted not only the supremacy of Mecca, but the welfare and importance of the State. He was therefore regarded as a dangerous political innovator. He preached the perfect equality of mankind. This levelled old distinctions. They would have none of it; and urgent measures were needed to stifle the movement before it gained further strength.

The "al-Amin" was henceforth the subject of ridicule: when he walked the streets, he was subjected to jeers, and taunts, and insults by the people. When he attempted to preach, his voice was drowned by discordant noises and ribald songs; nay, they would throw dirt upon him when he prayed. His followers were next the subject of bitter persecution on account of their faith, and several were the martyrs to his cause. The

martyrdom of Yasir, and Samiyya, his wife, and the fearful sufferings of Khabbab, son of Aratt, Bilal, Suheib, Aflah, Uthman son of Affan, Zubeir son of Awwam, Musaab son of Umair, Said son of Zeid, Saad son of Wakkas, Lubeinah, Zuneirah, Nahdiyah, and Umm Ubays, about this time, will bear comparison with any in the world.

Full of anxiety for the safety of his followers, Mohammed advised them to take refuge in Abyssinia, where ruled a pious Christian King, reputed to be tolerant and just. They did so to the number of fifteen, while Mohammed remained at his post. These first emigrants were soon joined by more the next year, till the number reached one hundred. The Koreish sent to the King demanding that the exiles should be given up for death, whereupon one of their number, Jaafar, acting as their spokesman, explained the situation thus:

O King, we were plunged in the depth of ignorance and barbarism; we adored idols; we lived in unchastity; we ate dead bodies; and

we spoke abominations; we disregarded every feeling of humanity and the duties of hospitality and neighbourhood; we knew no law but that of the strong, when God raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty, and purity we were aware; and he called us to the unity of God, and taught us not to associate anything with Him; he forbade us the worship of idols; and enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful, and to regard the rights of neighbours; he forbade us to speak evil of women, or to eat the substance of orphans; he ordered us to fly vices, and to abstain from evil; to offer prayers, to render alms, to observe the fast. We have believed in him, we have accepted his teachings and his injunctions to worship God, and not to associate anything with Him. For this reason our people have risen against us, have persecuted us in order to make us forego the worship of God and return to the worship of idols of wood and stone and other abominations. They have tortured us and injured us, until finding no safety among them, we have come to thy country, and hope thou wilt protect us from their oppression.

The King refused to give up the men, and the Koreish messengers returned to Mecca discomfited.

The failure of this attempt increased the hostility of the Koreish towards the small body of Moslems who remained in Mecca. Mohammed answered them by

frequenting the approaches to the Kaabah, and by delivering his message to the wild Arabs of the desert who resorted to the national fair or the pilgrimage there.

Finding their endeavours to dissuade Mohammed unavailing, the Koreish sought to tempt him with specious promises. Finding again that bribes, and threats, and entreaties were alike powerless to deter him, they urged Abu-Talib to silence his nephew or to send him away; and they also informed him that if his nephew and his followers persisted in their heresies, they should pay for them with their lives. Abu-Talib, in his turn, informed his nephew of the menances, imploring him not to provoke against himself and his family such numerous and powerful foes. But though Mohammed believed that at length his uncle was indeed about to abandon him, his courage and high resolve never faltered. Firmly he replied, "Though they set the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, to persuade me, yet while God bids me, I will not re-

nounce my purpose." But to lose his uncle's love!—he burst into tears, and turned to depart. The good old Abu-Talib, however, recalled him and assured him of his continued protection.

This excited the fury of the Koreish; but they were cowed by two great additions that were now joined to the Moslem ranks. One was Mohammed's uncle Hamzah, and the other Omar. The gain of two such men first frightened then maddened the Koreish, who now resolved on extreme measures. They determined to cut off the obnoxious family of the Hashimites from the rest of their kindred. A document was drawn up in which the chief men vowed that they would not marry with the Hashimites, nor hold any intercourse, even of bargain or sale, with them, until they should deliver their kinsman, Mohammed, for punishment. Abu-Talib even feared they might attempt the life of his nephew, either by treachery or open violence, and persuaded Mohammed with some of his followers to withdraw to his *sheb*, or

quarter, a long and narrow defile to the east of Mecca. To the credit of Mohammed and of his clan, only one man of them refused to share his fate, though most of them did not hold with his doctrines. Sooner than give up their beloved "al-Amin," they went, every man of them, save that one, into the mountain retreat, and there shut themselves up.

The ban was put rigorously in force. Mohammed and his party found themselves cut off from all supply of corn and other necessaries of life. For three years they lay under the ban, shut up in the ravine. Only at the pilgrimage-time, when all violence was sacrilege, could Mohammed come forth and address the pilgrims on the subject of his message. It seemed as if they must all perish: their stores were almost gone, and the cries of starving children could be heard outside.

At last, the manly bearing of Mohammed under such severe trial and in the face of all discouragement, and his constant success among those of his

clan who were shut up with him, shamed the Koreish, and they allowed the prisoner to come forth and mix once more with the rest of the world.

The return of Mohammed to Mecca was followed by important conversions, both of the inhabitants and of pilgrims from afar.

About this time, Abu-Talib died. With his dying breath he commended Mohammed to his people in the following words:

. . . And I enjoin upon you goodness in respect of Mohammed; for he is the 'al-Amin' (the Trusty) among the Koreish, and 'as-Siddiq' (the True) among the Arabs, and he unites in his person all the virtues which I have enjoined upon you: he has come with a message which the heart accepts but to which the tongue is averse for fear of opposition (which it may evoke). By God! I see as though the brigands of the Arabs, and the people of the neighbourhood, and the depressed among people, are (all) going to respond to his call, and believe in his words and exalt his message. He has begun in the greatest agony; but the chief men of the Koreish have given way, and their princes have followed suit, and their turn is evil; and their depressed people are going to be lords, while those who exalted themselves above him (Mohammed) are going over to him; and the most remote from him are giving themselves over to him as his

exclusive property; the bodes of Arabs are freely bestowing upon him their love, and are submitting themselves to his lead. Ye and your brothers! be ye his friends, and protectors to his party. By God! he will never ask any one to follow a way except that it be right; and if it were for me to live, I should certainly have striven to ward off from him all troubles.

"The sacrifices to which Abu Talib exposed himself and his family for the sake of his nephew, while yet incredulous of his mission," says Muir, "stamp his character as singularly noble and unselfish. They afford at the same time strong proof of the sincerity of Mohammad. Abu Talib would not have acted thus for an interested deceiver; and he had ample means of scrutiny."

A few days after the death of Abu-Talib, Mohammed's wife Khadijah expired in his arms. For twenty-five years she had been his 'angel of hope and consolation,' and now his soul and his hearth had become desolate.

Notwithstanding that at so advanced an age she must have lost every youthful charm, Mohammed had remained

faithful to her to the last, never giving her a rival in his house nor in his heart.

Mohammed's gratitude to her memory survived her to his latest hour. Even the fresh and budding charms of Ayesah (a wife who had replaced her) could not obliterate the deep and mingled feeling of tenderness and gratitude for his early benefactress. Ayesah was piqued one day at hearing him indulge in these fond recollections. "O Apostle of God," demanded the youthful beauty, "was not Khadijah stricken in years, her eyes dim and her teeth gone? Has not Allah given thee a fairer and a better?" "No, by Allah!" cried Mohammed, in an honest burst of generous emotion, "there never was a better and a kinder helpmate! When I was poor, she enriched me; when I was pronounced a liar, she believed in me; when I was opposed and persecuted by the world, she remained true to me."

"I was never more jealous of any one of the Prophet's wives," said Ayesah, "than I was of Khadijah, although I

never saw her; for the Prophet would remember her much and many a time would he send presents to the friends of Khadijah; and although I often said to him, ‘It is as though there never was another woman in the world!’ he would dilate upon her virtues in his own way.”¹

“He seems to have lived in a most affectionate, peaceable, wholesome way with this wedded benefactress; loving her truly, and her alone. It goes greatly against the impostor theory, the fact that he lived in this entirely unexceptionable, entirely quiet and commonplace way, till the heat of his years was done. He was forty before he talked of any mission from Heaven. All his irregularities, real and supposed, date from after his fiftieth year, when the good Khadijah died. All this ‘ambition,’ seemingly, had been, hitherto, to live an honest life; his ‘fame,’ the mere good opinion of neighbours that

knew him, had been sufficient hitherto. Not till he was already getting old, the prurient heat of his life all burnt out, and *peace* growing to be the chief thing this world could give him, did he start on the ‘career of ambition,’ and belying all his past character and existence, set-up as a wretched empty charlatan to acquire what he could now no longer enjoy! For my share,” emphatically says Carlyle, “I have no faith whatever in that.”

Mohammed’s position indeed was now becoming critical at Mecca. Islam could no more exist with idolatry. Mohammed’s followers, though devotedly attached, and numbering some once influential citizens, were but a handful against a host; besides, the greater part of them were now in Abyssinia.

Mohammed bethought himself of trying a new field. If Mecca rejected his message, might not Tayif receive the same? He set out on foot on his journey of seventy miles, taking only Zeid with him; and he told the people of Tayif his message. “There is something lofty and

heroic," says Muir, "in this journey of Mohammad to At-Ta'if; a solitary man, despised and rejected by his own people, going boldly forth in the name of God, like Jonah to Nineveh, and summoning an idolatrous city to repent and to support his mission. It sheds a strong light on the intensity of his belief in the divine origin of his calling."

For ten days Mohammed strove to deliver his message, but the people hooted him through the streets, pelted him with stones, and finally obliged him to flee the city pursued by a relentless rabble. Bleeding and fainting, he paused to rest in an orchard, to recover strength before going back to the insults of his own people. There raising his hands towards heaven, he prayed: "O Lord ! I make my complaint unto Thee, out of my feebleness and my insignificance before mankind. Thou most merciful God, Lord of the weak! Thou art my Lord. Forsake me not, nor leave me a prey to strangers or to mine enemies. If Thou art not offended, I am safe. I seek refuge in

the light of Thy countenance, by which all darkness is dispelled and peace prevails. Let not Thy anger come upon me; otherwise solve my difficulty as it pleases Thee. There is no fear and no power but in Thee!"

Half-way lay the Valley of Nakhlah, with an idol fane and a shady grove. Here Mohammed halted. And, as was his wont, after his prayers, he recited certain portions from the Koran, which falling upon the ears of a group of men from Nisibin and Nineveh, in Mesopotamia, gained them over to his cause.¹

Mohammed spent some days at Nakhlah, and then went on his way.

He entered Mecca under the pledge of protection granted to him by a brave nobleman named Mutim. Here he lived for some time retired from his people, preaching occasionally, but confining his efforts mainly to the strangers who congregated at Mecca and its vicinity during the season of the pilgrimage, hop-

ing to find among them some who would carry his message to their people.

For a time all his attempts to gain converts among the pilgrims were unsuccessful. They drew back from a man stigmatized as an apostate, and the worldly-minded were unwilling to befriend one proscribed by the powerful of his native place.

"Mohammad thus holding his people at bay; waiting in the still expectation of victory; to outward appearance defenceless, and with his little band as it were in the lion's mouth; yet trusting in His almighty power whose Messenger he believed himself to be, resolute and unmoved; presents a spectacle of sublimity paralleled only by such scenes in the Sacred Records as that of the prophet of Israel when he complained to his Master, 'I, even I only, am left.'"¹

"Nay," to Muir and those of his school, "the spectacle is in one point

¹ Sir Wm. Muir, *The Life of Mohammad*, p. 126. Weir's edn.

of view even more amazing, for the prophets of old were upheld (as we may suppose) by the prevailing consciousness of a divine inspiration, and strengthened by the palpable demonstrations of miraculous power; while with the Arabian his recollection of former doubts, and confessed inability to work any miracle, may at times have cast across him a shadow of uncertainty. It is this which brings if possible into still bolder prominence the marvellous self-possession and enthusiasm which sustained Mohammad on his course."

But Mohammed did not lose heart. At length, one day as he was preaching on the hill of Akabah, a little to the north of Mecca, he drew the attention of certain pilgrims from Yethrib, who became his converts, and returning to their city spread the message of Islam.

The following year these Yethribites returned, bringing six more of their fellow-citizens as deputies from the two principal tribes of Aus and Khazraj who occupied that city. These also took

the oath of allegiance, and returned to their city. In a short time, they so prepared the ground by their zealous propagation, that the new faith spread rapidly from house to house and from tribe to tribe.

About this time, hopes of the dawning of a new day and glorious scenes of a happy future now and then flitted across the mind of Mohammed. In one of these broodings occurred the notable Vision of the Night-journey which was to materialise the following year with such marvellous consequences : That Mohammed was led, under Divine guidance, on a journey, by night marches, from Mecca to a far-off place, there to behold the might and power of God's Providence.¹ How this came about in history will form the subject of the following pages.

Again the time of pilgrimage came round and with it the Yethribites accompanied by upwards of seventy of

¹ Koran, S. 17. 1.

the converts of Yethrib came to Mecca to invite the Prophet to take up his abode in their city. Mohammed gave them a midnight meeting on the hill of Akabah. His uncle Abbas (who took an affectionate interest in his welfare, though no convert to his doctrines) entreated these converts from Yethrib not to entice his nephew to their city until more able to protect him, warning them that their open adoption of the new faith would bring all Arabia in arms against them. His warnings and entreaties were in vain: a solemn compact was made between the parties. The former pledge was repeated and the following added :

We would defend him and his, even as we would our own women and children.

And every one of the converts swore allegiance to Mohammed and his God. The voice of some stranger near by dispressed the meeting.

The following morning the Koreish manifested a knowledge of what had taken place in the night, and treated

the new confederates with great harshness as they were leaving Mecca. It was clear that Mecca was no longer a place for the Moslems, and a few days after when the Yethribites had departed, Mohammed, seeing a crisis at hand, and being resolved to leave the city, advised his followers generally to provide for their safety. For two months the Moslems were leaving Mecca in small companies to make the journey of 286 miles to Yethrib. One hundred families had gone, and whole quarters of the city were deserted, left with empty houses and locked doors. There were but three Moslems now left at Mecca—Mohammed, Abu-Bakr, and Ali. "Like the captain of a sinking ship, the Prophet would not leave till all the crew were safe. But now they were all gone save his two early friends, and everything was ready for the journey; still the Prophet did not go." Abu-Sufyan, at this time governor of the city, held a meeting of the chiefs of the Koreish to devise some means of wreaking a

vengeance upon Mohammed. Some advised that Mohammed should be banished; but it was objected that he might gain other tribes to his interest, or perhaps the people of Yethrib. Others proposed to wall him up in a dungeon until he died, but it was surmised that his friends might effect his escape. At length, it was decided that the only effectual check on the growing evil was to put Mohammed to death; and as a means of sharing the odium of the deed, and withstand-
ing the vengeance it might awaken among the relatives of the victim, it was arranged that a number of each family should plunge his sword into the heart of Mohammed.

A number of noble youths were selected for the deed. As night advanced, they posted themselves round the Prophet's dwelling. There they watched all night long, waiting to murder him when he should leave his house in the early dawn; peeping now and then through a crevice to make sure that he still lay on bed. On the other side, the instinct of self-

preservation was doing its own work. In order to keep the attention of the assassins fixed upon the bed, Mohammed put his own garment upon the devoted Ali, bade him lie on his bed, and escaped, like David, through the window. He went straight to Abu-Bakr, and with him sought refuge in a cave on Mount Thaur, about an hour-and-a-half's journey from Mecca.

In the meantime, as the day dawned, the assassins had burst open the door and rushed towards the couch. The sleeper started up; but instead of Mohammed, Ali stood before them. Amazed and confounded, yet struck by the self-denying spirit of the youthful Ali, they demanded, "Where is Mohammed?" "Was I a keeper over him?" replied Ali, and walked forth. Nor did any one care to molest him.

The Koreish were now mad with rage at the escape of their victim: they proclaimed a reward of an hundred camels to any one who should bring them Mohammed alive or dead. Horsemen

scoured the country. On more than one occasion, the danger approached so near that the heart of Abu-Bakr, though a very brave man, quaked with fear. "We are but two," said he. "Nay!" said Mohammed, "we are three; be not distressed then, surely God is with us." And indeed He was with them. A spider, it is said, wove its web at the entrance, and wild pigeons settled on the branches of the adjoining trees in undisturbed repose. For three days Mohammed and his companion remained there. On the fourth day when they presumed the ardour of pursuit had abated, the fugitives ventured forth, and set out for Yethrib by unfrequented paths. But even here the way was full of danger. They had not proceeded far before they were overtaken by a wild and fierce warrior named Surakah. The heart of Abu-Bakr misgave him, but Mohammed said God would protect them. And He did indeed protect them. As Surakah overtook Mohammed, his horse reared and fell with him at the

Prophet's feet. Struck with sudden awe, he entreated the forgiveness of Mohammed, and made the profession of Islam.

The fugitives continued their journey until they reached Kuba, a hill about two miles from Yethrib. Here Mohammed halted for four days, and made many converts from among its inhabitants.

On the 2nd of July 622 A.C. the Prophet entered Yethrib amidst universal rejoicings of its people, who, in honour of the Prophet, changed the ancient name of their city to *Medinatun-Nabi*, or the City of the Prophet; afterwards contracted into *al-Medinah*, or the City, by way of pre-eminence.

This was the memorable *Hijrat*, (corrupted into *Hegirah*), or the Flight of Mohammed, from which the Moslem Era dates.

I give below, in the words of Sir William Muir, a survey of the career of Mohammed at Mecca:

"Few and simple as were the precepts of Mohammad up to this time, his teaching had wrought a marvellous and

a mighty work. Never since the days when primitive Christianity startled the world from its sleep and waged mortal combat with heathenism, had men seen the like arousing of spiritual life, and faith that suffered sacrifice and took joyfully the spoiling of goods for conscience' sake.

"From time beyond memory, Mecca and the whole peninsula had been steeped in spiritual torpor. The slight and transient influences of Judaism, Christianity, or philosophical inquiry, upon the Arab mind had been but as the ruffling here and there of the surface of a quiet lake; all remained still and motionless below. The people were sunk in superstition, cruelty, and vice. It was a common practice for the eldest son to take to wife his father's widows, whom he inherited with the rest of the estate. Pride and poverty had introduced among them (as they have among the Hindoos) the crime of female infanticide. Their re-

¹ "It is stringently prescribed in the Kor'an

ligion was a gross idolatry; and their faith the dark superstitious dread of unseen beings whose goodwill they sought to propitiate and whose displeasure to avert, rather than the belief in an overruling Providence. The Life to come and Retribution of good and evil as motives of action were practically unknown.

“Thirteen years before the Hijra, Mecca lay lifeless in this debased state. What a change had those thirteen years now produced! A band of several hundred persons had rejected idolatry, adopted the worship of One God, and surrendered themselves implicitly to the guidance of what they believed a Revelation from Him; praying to the Almighty with frequency and fervour, looking for pardon through His mercy, and striving to follow after good works, almsgiving, purity, and justice. They now lived under a constant sense of the omnipotent power of God, and of His providential care

(lxxxi. 8, etc.), and disappeared with the progress of Islam.”

over the minutest of their concerns. In all the gifts of nature, in every relation of life, at each turn of their affairs, individual or public, they saw His hand. And, above all, the new existence in which they exulted was regarded as the mark of His especial grace; while the unbelief of their blinded fellow-citizens was the hardening stamp of reprobation. Mohammad was the minister of life to them, the source under God of their new-born hopes; and to him they yielded an implicit submission.

"In so short a period Mecca had, from this wonderful movement, been rent into two factions which, unmindful of the old land-marks of tribe and family, arrayed themselves in deadly opposition one against the other. The Believers bore persecution with a patient and tolerant spirit. And though it was their wisdom so to do, the credit of a magnanimous forbearance may be freely accorded. One hundred men and women rather than abjure their precious faith, had abandoned home and sought refuge,

till the storm should be overpast, in Abyssinian exile. And now again a larger number, with the Prophet himself, were emigrating from their fondly-loved city with its sacred Temple, to them the holiest spot on earth, and fleeing to Medina. There, the same marvellous charm had within two or three years been preparing for them a brotherhood ready to defend the Prophet and his followers with their blood. Jewish truth had long sounded in the ears of the men of Medina; but it was not until they heard the spirit-stirring strains of the Arabian prophet that they too awoke from their slumber, and sprang suddenly into a new and earnest life."¹

"A great change now comes over the Prophet's life. It is still the same man, but the surroundings are totally different; the work to be done is on a wider, rougher stage. Thus far we have seen a gentle, thoughtful boy tending the sheep round Mekka;—a young man of little note,

¹ Sir William Muir, *The Life of Mohammad.*, pp. 161, 162. Weir's edn.

of whom the people only knew that he was pure and upright and true;—then a man of forty whose solitary communion with his soul has pressed him to the last terrible questions that each man, if he will think at all, must some time ask himself—What is life? What does this world mean? What is reality, what is truth? Long months, years perhaps, we know not how long and weary, filled with the tortures of doubt and the despair of ever attaining to the truth, filled with the dreary thought of his aloneness in the relentless universe, and the longing to end it all, brought at last their fruits—sure conviction of the great secret of life, a firm belief in the Creator in whom all things live and move and have their being, whom to serve is man's highest duty and privilege, the one thing to be done. And then ten years of struggling with careless, unthinking idolators; ten years of slow results, the gaining over of a few close friends, the devoted attachment of some slaves and men of

the meaner rank; finally, the conversion of half-a-dozen great citizen chiefs, ending in the flight of the whole brotherhood of believers from their native city and their welcome to a town of strangers, where the faith had forced itself home to the hearts of perhaps two hundred citizens. It was but little that was done; so many years of toil, of indomitable courage and perseverance and long-suffering, and only about three hundred converts at the end! But it was the seed of a great harvest. Mohammad had shown men what he was; the nobility of his character, his strong friendship, his endurance and courage, above all, his earnestness and fiery enthusiasm for the truth he came to preach,—these things had revealed the hero, the master whom it was alike impossible to disobey and impossible not to love. Henceforward it is only a question of time. As the men of Medina come to know Mohammad, they too will devote themselves to him body and soul; and the enthusiasm will catch fire

and spread among the tribes till all Arabia is at the feet of the Prophet of the One God. ‘No emperor with his tiaras was obeyed as this man in a cloak of his own clouting.’ He had the gift of influencing men, and he had the nobility only to influence them for good.”¹

We shall now see Mohammed as statesman and king. Though he came as a fugitive, yet it was not long before his word was supreme in his adopted city.

“He had to rule over a mixed and divided people, and this must have helped him to the supreme voice. There were four distinct parties at Medina. First, the ‘Refugees’ (Muhájiroon), who had fled from Mekka; on these Mohammad could always rely with implicit faith. But he attached equal importance to the early converts of Medina, who had invited him among them and given him a home when the future seemed very hopeless before him, and who were thenceforward

¹ Lane-Poole.

known by the honourable title of the 'Helpers' (Ansár). How devoted was the affection of these men is shown by the well-known scene at El-Jí'ráneh, when the Helpers were discontented with their share of the spoils, and Mohammad answered, 'Why are ye disturbed in mind because of the things of this life wherewith I have sought to incline the hearts of these men of Mekka into Islám, whereas ye are already steadfast in the faith? Are ye not satisfied that others should obtain the flocks and the camels, while ye carry back the Prophet of the Lord unto your homes? Nay, I will not leave you for ever. If all mankind went one way, and the men of Medina went another way, verily I would go the way of the men of Medina. The Lord be favourable unto them, and bless them, and their sons, and their sons' sons, for ever!' And the 'Helpers' wept upon their beards, and cried with one voice, 'Yea, we are well satisfied, O Prophet, with our lot.' To retain the allegiance of the Refugees and the Helpers was

never a trouble to Mohammad; the only difficulty was to rein in their zeal and hold them back from doing things of blood and vengeance on the enemies of Islám. To prevent the danger of jealousy between the Refugees and the Helpers, Mohammad assigned each Refugee to one of the Ansár to be his brother; and this tie of gossipry superseded all nearer ties, till Mohammad saw the time was over when it was needed. The third party in Medina was that of the 'Disaffected,' or in the language of Islám the 'Hypocrites' (*Munáfikoon*). This was composed of the large body of men who gave in their nominal allegiance to Mohammad and his religion when they saw they could not safely withstand his power, but who were always ready to turn about if they thought there was a chance of his overthrow. Mohammad treated these men and their leader 'Abdullah ibn Ubayy (who himself aspired to the sovrainty of Medina) with patient courtesy and friendliness, and, though they actually deserted

him more than once at vitally critical moments, he never retaliated, even when he was strong enough to crush them, but rather sought to win them over heartily to his cause by treating them as though they were what he would have them be. The result was that this party gradually diminished and became absorbed in the general mass of earnest Muslims, and though up to its leader's death it constantly called forth Mohammad's powers of conciliation, after that it vanished from the history of parties.

"The fourth party was the real thorn in the Prophet's side. It consisted of the Jews, of whom three tribes were settled in the suburbs of Medina. They had at first been well disposed to Mohammad's coming. He could not indeed be the Messiah, because he was not of the lineage of David; but he would do very well to pass off upon their neighbours, the pagan Arabs, as, if not the Messiah, at least a great prophet; and by his influence the Jews might regain their old supremacy in Medina. . . .

When Mohammad came, they found out their mistake; instead of a tool they had a master. He told the people, indeed, the stories of the Midrash, and he professed to revive the religion of Abraham: but he added to this several damning articles; he taught that Jesus *was* the Messiah, that no other Messiah was to be looked for; and, moreover, while reverencing and inculcating the doctrine of the Hebrew prophets and of Christ, as he knew it, he yet insisted on his own mission as in nowise inferior to theirs—as, in fact, the seal of prophecy by which all that went before was confirmed or abrogated. The illusion was over: the Jews would have nothing to say to Islâm: they set themselves instead to oppose it, ridicule it, and vex its Preacher in every way that their notorious ingenuity could devise.

“The step was false: the Jews missed their game, and they had to pay for it. Whether it was possible to form a coalition,—whether the Jews might have induced Mohammad to waive certain minor

points if they recognised his prophetic mission,—it is difficult to say. It seems most probable that Mohammad would not have yielded a jot to their demands, and would have accepted nothing short of unconditional surrender to his religion. And it is at least doubtful whether Islam would have gained anything by a further infusion of Judaism. It already contained all that it could assimilate of the Hebrew faith; the rest was too narrow for the universal scope of Islâm. The religion of Mohammad lost little, we may be sure, by the standing aloof of the Arabian Jews; but the Jews themselves lost much. Mohammad, indeed, treated them kindly so long as kindness was possible. He made a treaty with them, whereby the rights of the Muslims and the Jews were defined. They were to practise their several religions unmolested; protection and security were promised to all the parties to the treaty, irrespective of creed; each was to help the other if attacked; no alliance was to be made with Kureysh; war was to

be made in common, and no war could be made without the consent of Mohammad : crime alone could do away with the protection of this treaty.

“But the Jews would not content themselves with standing aloof; they must needs act on the offensive. . . . When asked which they preferred, Islâm or idolatry, they frankly avowed that they preferred idolatry. To lie about their own religion and to ridicule another religion that was doing a great and good work around them was not enough for these Jews; they must set their poets to work to lampoon the women of the believers in obscene verse, and such outrages upon common decency, not to say upon the code of Arab honour and chivalry, became a favourite occupation among the poets of the Jewish clans.

“These were offences against the religion and the persons of the Muslims. They also conspired against the state. Mohammad was not only the preacher of Islâm, he was also the king of Medina, and was responsible for the safety and

peace of the city. As a prophet, he could afford to ignore the jibes of the Jews, though they maddened him to fury; but as the chief of the city, the general in a time of almost continual warfare, when Medina was kept in a state of military defence and under a sort of military discipline, he could not overlook treachery. He was bound by his duty to his subjects to suppress a party that might (and nearly did) lead to the sack of the city by investing armies. The measures he took for this object have furnished his European biographers with a handle for attack. It is, I believe, solely on the ground of his treatment of the Jews that Mohammad has been called ‘a bloodthirsty tyrant’: it would certainly be difficult to support the epithet on other grounds.

“The bloodthirstiness consists in this: some half-dozen Jews, who had distinguished themselves by their virulence against the Muslims, or by their custom of carrying information to the common enemy of Medina, were executed; two

of the three Jewish clans were sent into exile, just as they had previously come into exile, and the third was exterminated—the men killed, and the women and children made slaves. The execution of the half-dozen marked Jews is generally called assassination, because a Muslim was sent secretly to kill each of the criminals. The reason is almost too obvious to need explanation. There were no police or law-courts or even courts-martial at Medina; some one of the followers of Mohammad must therefore be the executor of the sentence of death, and it was better it should be done quietly, as the executing of a man openly before his clan would have caused a brawl and more bloodshed and retaliation, till the whole city had become mixed up in the quarrel. If secret assassination is the word for such deeds, secret assassination was a necessary part of the internal government of Medina. The men must be killed, and best in that way. In saying this I assume that Mohammad was cognisant of the deed, and that it

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was not merely a case of private vengeance ; but in several instances the evidence that traces these executions to Mohammad's order is either entirely wanting or is too doubtful to claim our credence.

"Of the sentences upon the three whole clans, that of exile, passed upon two of them, was clement enough. They were a turbulent set, always setting the people of Medina by the ears ; and finally a brawl followed by an insurrection resulted in the expulsion of one tribe ; and insubordination, alliance with enemies, and a suspicion of conspiracy against the Prophet's life, ended similarly for the second. Both tribes had violated the original treaty, and had endeavoured in every way to bring Mohammad and his religion to ridicule and destruction. The only question is whether their punishment was not too light. Of the third clan a fearful example was made, not by Mohammad, but by an arbiter appointed by themselves. When the Kureysh and their allies were besieging Medina, and had well-nigh stormed the defences, this

Jewish tribe entered into negotiations with the enemy, which were only circumvented by the diplomacy of the Prophet. When the besiegers had retired, Mohammad naturally demanded an explanation of the Jews. They resisted in their dogged way, and were themselves besieged and compelled to surrender at discretion. Mohammad, however, consented to the appointing of a chief of a tribe allied to the Jews as the judge who should pronounce sentence upon them. The man in question was a fierce soldier, who had been wounded in the attack on the Jews, and indeed died from his wound the same day. This chief gave sentence that the men, in number some six hundred, should be killed, and the women and children enslaved;¹

¹ This was in strict accordance with the admitted customs of war among the Jews; cf. Deuteronomy xx. 10-18. But Mohammed received the judgment of Saad (the arbiter, on whom the tribe of Koreizah relied for mercy) with the remark, "Thou hast truly decided like a king." (Bukhari: Kitabu'l-Jihad.) To him it pronounced all the caprice of a despotic monarch. In fact, the women and children

and the sentence was carried out. It was a harsh, bloody sentence, worthy of the episcopal generals of the army against the Albigenses, or of the deeds of the Augustan age of Puritanism; but it must be remembered that the crime of these men was high treason against the State, during time of siege; and those who have read how Wellington's march could be traced by the bodies of deserters and pillagers hanging from the trees, need not be surprised at the summary

were not guilty of treason, and deserved no punishment. Saad's judgment was allowed to be applied to those only who were guilty. "One woman alone was put to death; it was she who threw the mill-stone from the battlements." (Muir, *The Life of Mahomet*, vol. iii. p. 277.) All the women and children were afterwards released; some ransomed themselves, others went off with their freedom. But nobody was sold into slavery. The number of men executed could scarcely have been 200. Cf. Syed Ameer Ali, *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed*, p. 113. Williams and Norgate, London. 1873. Also M. Cheragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition of the Popular 'Jihad'*, p. 91. This last work may also be referred to in regard to many a trash collected by certain European writers on the punishment meted out to the unfortunate Koreizah.

execution of a traitorous clan."¹

Whilst Mohammed's supremacy was being established and maintained among the mixed population of Medinah, a vigorous warfare was being carried on outside with his old persecutors, the Koreish.

The route of the Koreish caravan traffic with the north passed between Medinah and the sea-coast. This put the Meccans in constant touch with the state of affairs at Medinah, and any moment they might pour in their army against Mohammed and his band of refugees and those who had made common cause with them. Soon after settling his affairs at home, Mohammed therefore sent reconnoitring parties to bring him news of the movements of the Meccans, whose attitude, he had reason to believe, had become more hostile since his flight to Medinah. Such were the parties of 30 men despatched under Hamzah, of 50 or 60 men under Obeidah, of 20 men under Saad, and of 7 men under Abdullah son of Jahsh.

¹ Lane-Poole.

Mohammed also led several expeditions to conclude treaties of neutrality with the neighbouring tribes like those of Damrah (who were connected with Mecca) and Mudlij (a tribe of Kinanah related to the Koreish). Such were his expeditions to al-Abwa, Bowat, and Osheira.¹

It was not till the second year of the general expulsion of the Moslems from Mecca, when the Prophet was greatly concerned on receiving the news of the advance of the Koreish, with a large army of 1000 strong, mounted on 700 camels and 100 horses upon Medinah, that the Moslems prepared for battle. Medinah is 276 miles, or 12 stages, to the north of Mecca. The Koreish had already marched fully armed. What was to be done for the preservation of the poor Moslems and the men of Medinah who had made common cause with them?

In this extremity came the following strict injunction :—

¹ “The provisions are noted only generally, that neither party would levy war against the other, nor help the enemies.”—Muir, *Life*, iii. 67, note.

"Fight in the cause of God with those who fight with you; but transgress not; verily God loves not the transgressors. . .

"But if they desist [from fighting with you, God does not allow you to fight with them], for verily God is forgiving, compassionate.

"And fight with them until there be no more mischief-making and the judgment of God come; but if they desist, then let there be no hostility, except against the wrong-doers." ¹

But the Prophet was still reluctant to stand up for war till it occurred to him that he was head of the State as well as of the Church, and as in duty bound to his subjects, had to defend Medinah against any aggressive attacks of the Koreish; his conscience smote him and then came the following:—

"Enjoined upon you is war; but it is hateful to you. Yet it may be that ye hate a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that ye love a thing

¹ Koran, S. 2. 190-93.

while it is bad for you: God knows, and ye—ye do not know.”¹

The Koreish had already marched 6 stages from Mecca and were now midway between Mecca and Medina. Mohammed proposed to check their advance by a rapid march, and set out from Medinah with 300 of his faithful followers and entered the fertile valley watered by the brook Badr. Here Mohammed posted his little army on a rising ground, with water at the foot of it. And here was fought the first battle of Islam, in which the Moslems came out victorious.

Forty-nine of the Koreish remained dead on the field, and nearly the same number were taken prisoners. Fourteen Moslems were slain.

After the enemy had disappeared, Mohammed arranged for the burial of their dead. The sight of his dead enemies moved him deeply; and placing himself by the side of the large grave or pit which

¹ Koran, S. 2. 216.

had been prepared for them, he addressed to them a solemn apostrophe: "Ye my kindred! ye rejected me while others believed in me; ye cast me forth while others gave me refuge; ye fought against me while others came to my help. What destiny has been yours! Alas! all that God threatened is fulfilled."

Next came the question of prisoners. "In pursuance of Mohammad's command, and in accord with the passage already quoted,¹ the Citizens and such of the Refugees as had houses of their own, received the prisoners with kindness and consideration. 'Blessings on the men of Medina!' said one of these in later days: 'they made us ride, while they themselves walked afoot; they gave us wheaten bread to eat when there was little of it, contenting themselves with dates.'"²

Not one prisoner was executed.³

¹ Koran, S. 8. 67 ff.

² Muir.

"Only one of them was afterwards put to death. His name was Abdul-Uzza. He had been one of the bitterest persecutors of Moslems at Mecca.

"It is not surprising, therefore, that some of the captives, yielding to these influences, declared themselves Believers, and to such their liberty was at once granted."¹ The rest of "the captives were redeemed according to their several means—some paying a thousand, and others as much as four thousand pieces. Such as had nothing to give were liberated without payment; but a service was required . . . —to each were allotted ten boys, to be taught the art of writing; and the teaching was accepted as a ransom."²

Soon after his return to Medinah, Mohammed tried every possible means

Having fallen into the hands of Moslems at Badr, he besought Mohammed to release him by way of compassion for his five daughters. Mohammed granted him his life and liberty without ransom on condition that he would never again bear up arms against the Moslems or their Prophet. As soon, however, as he had reached home, he exhorted the Arabs of his tribe to make war upon the Moslems, and himself joined the invading army of Mecca. This time he was caught at Hamra and duly executed by the Moslems.

¹ Muir, *Life*, p. 234.

² *Ibid.*

of obtaining a pacific solution of the difficulty which had arisen between the Moslems and their enemies, the Koreish of Mecca, and to avert war and its horrors. He informed the Koreish that if they desisted from attacking the Moslems they would be forgiven :—

“ [Ye people of Mecca!] if ye wish for a decision [of the matter between us], now is the decision come to you; and if ye desist [from attacking the Moslems], it will be better for you; but if ye return [to it], we will return too; and your forces shall avail not at all, though they be many, for that God is with the faithful.¹

“ Say to the unbelievers that if they desist [from attacking the Moslems], what is already past shall be forgiven them; but if they return [to attack them], the example of those of old is already before them.”²

But all this to no effect.

As soon as the Koreish prisoners had

returned home, preparations were made at Mecca for another attack on Medinah. And with this view their chief Abu-Sufyan set out from Mecca with 200 mounted followers and, arrived by night at the Jewish settlement of an-Nadir, was by them hospitably entertained and furnished with intelligence regarding Medinah. On his way back, he fell upon the corn-fields and palm-gardens of the Medinites, burning to the ground their farm-houses and killing some cultivators. Alarm being given, Mohammed hastened in pursuit of him, but the enemy disappeared.

About this time two or three expeditions were undertaken against the tribes inhabiting the plain east of Medinah.

The Juheinah and other tribes on the sea-coast were already won over to Mohammed, but there remained the eastern caravan route to Babylonia which passed through the territories of two powerful nomad tribes, Suleim and Ghatafan, both allied to the Koreish and employed by them as carriers. Henceforth their attitude, especially of the Suleim, had be-

come actively hostile towards Mohammed. Incited by the Koreish, and by the example of Abu-Sufyan, they now projected a plundering attack upon Medinah. Timely intelligence reached Medinah that they had begun to assemble at Karkaratul-Kadr; Mohammed anticipating their design, hastened to surprise them at the head of 200 men. On reaching the spot Mohammed found it deserted.

A month later, the Ghatafan were reported to be again collecting troops in Najd. Heading a strong force of 450 men, Mohammed set out against them. On his approach, the enemy retired to the hills. A little later, Mohammed led another attack, at the head of 300 men, against the Suleim, who still maintained a threatening attitude. Arrived at their rendezvous, he found that the force had broken up.¹

The following month Mohammed received intelligence that a Koreish envoy who had come with a caravan traversing

the tableland of the central desert, had visited the Jewish tribe of an-Nadir and was entertained by them. He immediately despatched Zeid with 100 picked and well-mounted men to intercept the caravan. The leaders of the Koreish fled, the rest were overpowered, and all the merchandise was captured.¹

A year had passed since the battle of Badr, and the Meccans were now marching upon Medina: they were 3,000 strong. Of these 700 were mailed warriors, and 200 well-mounted cavalry; the remainder riding on camels. The army reached Dhul-Huleifah, about five miles west of Medinah, and then marching a few miles north, encamped in the fertile plain beneath the hill of Ohad.

Mohammed could only muster a thous-

¹ "From the moment one state is at war with another, it has, on general principles, a right to seize on all the enemy's property of whatsoever kind and wheresoever found, and to appropriate the property thus taken to its own use, or to that of the captors."—Wheaton, *Elements of International Law*, p. 419. Boston, 1855. Also Lieber, *Miscellaneous Writings*; Political Science, vol. ii. p. 250. Philadelphia, 1881.

and men: 100 had cuirasses, and but two were horsemen. With these he marched from Medinah and reached the sandy plain beneath the peaks of Ohad. His strict injunctions to his people were not to commence the fight but to stand firm and maintain their position. Above all, the archers were to keep to their posts, let the battle go as it might, lest the cavalry should fall upon his rear. The battle raged thick, and as the centre of the enemy was beginning to yield, the archers forgot the commands of Mohammed, and leaving their post, dispersed in search of spoil. The enemy perceiving their error, rallied the horse and fell on the rear of the Moslems. The infantry of the Koreish also turned, and the Moslem troops, taken both in rear and front, had to resume the battle at fearful odds. The Moslems lost the day. In the midst of the melee a stone from a sling struck Mohammed on the mouth, cutting his lip and knocking out one of his front teeth; he was also wounded in the face by an arrow. But his prayer recorded at this juncture is only—"My

God! guide them into the straight path, for they do not know." His uncle Hamzah fell, and Omar, Abu-Bakr, and Ali, all were wounded. But the Koreish were too exhausted to follow up their advantage and contented themselves with plundering and barbarously mutilating the Moslem dead. Hind, the wife of Abu-Sufyan, torn out and devoured the heart of Hamzah, and made bracelets and necklaces of the ears and noses of the dead. Abu-Sufyan bore a part of the mangled body upon his lance as a trophy of the battle. The barbarities of the Koreish created among the Moslems a feeling of bitter exasperation, and they vowed to inflict a like outrage on seventy of their enemies when in their power. But Mohammed's appeal to them was—

"And if ye inflict [an injury], inflict the like of what has been inflicted upon you; but if ye bear patiently, surely best will it be for the patient. Be thou patient then; but thy patience is only [practicable] with [the help of] God. And grieve not thou over them, nor be

thou in a worry at what they devise. Verily, God is with those who fear [to do wrong] and with those who are benevolent."¹

In the next two years Abu-Sufyan, the restless chief of the Koreish, formed a confederacy with the tribes of Ghatafan and others, as well as with the Jews who had remained behind near Kheibar. A formidable coalition was formed, and with their combined forces now amounting to 10,000 well-equipped men he prepared to march upon Medinah. Meeting no opposition on his way, he soon encamped within a few miles of the city. Mohammed had received timely intelligence of the movement, and endeavoured to put the city in a state of defence. With the advice of Salman, the Persian convert, Mohammed had a moat dug at some distance beyond the wall, on the side on which the enemy would approach.

Scarcely was the moat completed when the enemy appeared in great force on

¹ Koran, S. 16. 126-8.

the neighbouring hills. Leaving Abdullah, a trusted officer, to command in the city, and keep a vigilant eye on the party of Abdullah son of Ubbay, Mohammed sallied forth with 3,000 men, whom he formed in battle array, having the deep moat in front. Abu-Sufyan advanced confidently with his combined force, but was unexpectedly checked by the moat and by a galling fire from the Moslems drawn up beyond it. The enemy now encamped; and for some days the armies remained on each side of the moat, keeping up a distant combat with slings and stones, and flights of arrows.

In the meantime, spies brought word to Mohammed that the Jewish tribe of Koreizah, who had a strong castle near the city, and had entered into a compact with him, were in secret league with the enemy. Mohammed at once perceived the difficulty with his small forces to man the whole extent of the moat, to guard against a perfidious attack from the tribe of Koreizah, and to maintain quiet in the city where the Jews must

have secret confederates. He at once deputed Saad, son of Muadh, and Saad, son of Obadah, to entreat the tribe of Koreizah to return to their duty. But all in vain.

The siege had already lasted twenty days, and at last a party of the Koreish horsemen discovered a place where the moat was narrow, and putting spurs to their steeds succeeded in leaping over, followed by some of their comrades. The battle became general, and was maintained with great obstinacy; several were slain on both sides, and Saad was severely wounded. At length the Koreish gave way, and spurred their horses to recross the moat. The elements now conspired against the besieging army; their horses perished fast, provisions failed, disunion prevailed. In the darkness of night a cold storm came on, with drenching rain and sweeping blasts from the desert. Their tents were blown down; the camp-fires extinguished; in the midst of the uproar the alarm was given that Mohammed had raised the storm by enchantment, and was coming upon them with his

forces. All now was panic and confusion. Abu-Sufyan, finding all efforts vain to produce order, mounted his camel in despair, and gave the word to retreat. The confederates hurried off from the scene of tumult and terror, the Koreish towards Mecca, the others to their homes in the desert.

“The next year (A.H. 6) a ten years’ truce was concluded with the Kureysh, in pursuance of which a strange scene took place in the following spring. It was agreed that Mohammad and his people should perform the Lesser Pilgrimage, and that the Kureysh should for that purpose vacate Mekka for three days. Accordingly, in March 629, about two thousand Muslims, with Mohammad at their head on his famous camel El-Kaswá—the same on which he had fled from Mekka—trooped down the valley and performed the rites which every Muslim to this day observes.”¹

“It was surely a strange sight,” says Muir, “which at this time presented it-

¹ Lane-Poole.

self in the vale of Mecca—a sight, one might almost say, unique in history. The ancient city is for three days evacuated altogether by its inhabitants, and every house deserted. As they retire, the exiles, many years banished from their birthplace, accompanied by their allies, fill the valley, revisit the empty homes of their childhood, and within the short allotted period fulfil the rites of pilgrimage. The ousted citizens with their families, climbing the heights around, take refuge under tents or rocks amongst the hills and glens; and, clustering on the overhanging peak of Abu Kobeis, thence watch the movements of the visitors beneath, as with the Prophet at their head they perform the sacred rites—anxiously scanning every figure, if perchance to recognise among the worshippers some long-lost friend or relative. It was a scene rendered possible only by the throes that gave birth to Islám.”¹

"When the three days were over, Mohammad and his party peaceably returned to Medina; and the Mekkans re-entered their homes. But this pilgrimage, and the self-restraint of the Muslims therein, advanced the cause of Islam among its enemies. Converts increased daily, and some leading men of the Kureysh now went over to Mohammad. The clans around were sending in their deputations of homage. But the final keystone was set in the eighth year of the flight (A.D. 630), when a body of Kureysh broke the truce by attacking an ally of the Muslims; and Mohammad forthwith marched upon Mekka with ten thousand men, and the city, defence being hopeless, surrendered. Now was the time for the Prophet to show his blood-thirsty nature. His old persecutors are at his feet. Will he not trample on them, torture them, revenge himself after his own cruel manner? Now the man will come forward in his true colours: we may prepare our horror, and cry shame beforehand.

"But what is this? Is there no blood in the streets? Where are the bodies of the thousands that have been butchered? Facts are hard things; and it is a fact that the day of Mohammad's greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his grandest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Kureysh all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn they had inflicted on him: he gave an amnesty to the whole population of Mekka. Four criminals, whom justice condemned, made up Mohammed's proscription list when he entered as a conqueror the city of his bitterest enemies. The army followed his example, and entered quietly and peaceably; no house was robbed, no woman insulted. . . .

"It was thus that Mohammad entered again his native city. Through all the annals of conquest, there is no triumphant entry like unto this one."¹

At noon, a Moslem at the command of Mohammed, summoned the people to prayer from the top of the Kaabah.

¹ Lane-Poole.

He then addressed the people in a sermon, setting forth his principal doctrines, the unity, immateriality, power, mercy and supreme love of the Creator; charity, natural equality and brotherhood among mankind.

The religious ceremonial being thus ended, Mohammed took his station on the hill of Safa, and the people of Mecca, men and women, passed before him, taking the oath of fealty to him as the Prophet of God, and renouncing idolatry. In the midst of his triumph, however, he rejected all homage paid exclusively to himself, and all regal authority. "Why dost thou tremble?" said he to a man who approached with timid and faltering steps, "Of what dost thou stand in awe? I am no king, but the son of a Koreish woman who ate flesh dried in the sun."

About this time Abu-Bakr approached Mohammed leading his father Abu-Kuhafah, who was bowed down with great age, and whose locks were as silver. Mohammed received him with consideration:

"Why didst thou not leave thine aged father in his house, Abu-Bakr? for I would have gone and seen him there."

His lenity was equally conspicuous. The once haughty chiefs of the Koreish appeared with abject countenances before the man they had persecuted so virulently only the other day, for now their lives were in his power.

"Descendants of the Koreish, how do you think I should act towards you?" asked Mohammed of the Koreish. "With kindness and pity, gracious brother and nephew," replied they, with one voice. At these words, says the chronicler, Mohammed burst into tears, and said, "Yes; I will not reproach you to-day; God pardon you! verily He is the most merciful of the merciful"

Some of his followers who had shared his persecutions were disappointed in their anticipations of a bloody revenge, and murmured at his clemency; but Mohammed persisted in it, and read out to them the following from the Koran:

"Turn aside evil, with what is better.¹

"And who speaks better than he who calls [men] to God and does good, and then says Verily, I am a Moslem?

"Good and evil are not alike: turn aside [evil] with what is better; and lo! he between whom and thyself was enmity, shall become, as it were, [thy] warmest friend."² . . .

"Say to those who believe, that they pardon those who fear not the punishment of God.³ . . .

"And hasten emulously for pardon from your Lord and paradise, whose breadth is [as] the heavens and the earth, prepared for the pious; who are charitable in prosperity and adversity, and suppress [their] rage, and forgive men; for God loves those who do good."⁴

Among the Koreish women who advanced to take the oath he described Hind, the wife of Abu-Sufyan, the savage

¹ Koran, S. 23. 96.

² S. 41. 33, 34.

³ S. 45. 14.

⁴ S. 3. 133, 134.

woman who had animated the Koreish at the disastrous battle of Ohad, and had gnawed the heart of Hamzah, the uncle of Mohammed, after the battle of Ohad. On the present occasion she had disguised herself to escape detection, but seeing the eyes of Mohammed fixed on her, she threw herself at his feet, exclaiming, "I am Hind ; pardon ! pardon !" Mohammed at once pardoned her.

Among those destined for punishment was Waksah, the Ethiopian who had slain Hamzah; but he had fled from Mecca on the entrance of the army. At a subsequent period he presented himself before the Prophet and asked for forgiveness. He too was forgiven.

Another of the proscribed was Abdullah, son of Saad, son of Sarrah, a young Koreish, distinguished for wit and humour, as well as for warlike accomplishments. He was at one time a secretary to the Prophet, and when Mohammed dictated he used to change the words and denaturalise their meaning. His sacrilege being discovered he had fled

and had relapsed into idolatry. On the capture of the city, he supplicated Mohammed for pardon, which was granted, and he again turned a Moslem.

Another of the proscribed was Ikramah, son of Abu-Jahl, who on many occasions had manifested a deadly hostility to the Prophet inherited from his father. On the entrance of Mohammed into Mecca, Ikramah threw himself upon a fleet horse, and escaped by an opposite gate, leaving behind him a beautiful wife to whom he was recently married. She embraced Islam, but soon after learnt that her husband, in attempting by sea to Yeman, had been driven back to port. Hastening to the presence of the Prophet, she threw herself on her knees before him, loose, dishevelled, and unveiled, and implored grace for her husband. The Prophet, moved at her grief, raised her gently from the earth, and told her that her prayer was granted. Hurrying to the sea-port, she arrived just as the vessel in which her husband had embarked was about to sail. She returned mounted be-

hind him to Mecca. Touched by the kindness and gentle behaviour of the Prophet, Ikramah soon presented himself to the Prophet and accepted Islam at his feet. Mohammed appointed Ikramah as the commander of a battalion of the Hawazins, as the dower of his beautiful and devoted wife, and bestowed liberal donations on the youthful couple.

The Ansar, or helpers of Medinah, who had aided him in his campaign, began to fear its success might prove fatal to their own interests. They watched him anxiously, as one day, after praying on the hill of Safa, he sat gazing down wistfully upon Mecca, the scene of his early struggles and recent glory, and said one to another, "Behold! Mohammed is conqueror and master of the city of his birth; he will without doubt establish himself here, and forsake Medinah!" Their words reaching his ear, he turned to them and said, "No, by Allah! when ye plighted to me your allegiance, I swore to live and die with you; I should not act as the servant of God, nor as

His apostle, were I to leave you."

And he was as good as his word. The city of his fathers, the metropolis of his race, the shrine of his religion was again deserted for his humble dwelling among those who had stood by him in the day of trial.

Mohammed now despatched his principal disciples in every direction to call the wild tribes of the desert to Islam, with strict injunctions to preach peace and goodwill, to inculcate the faith and to abstain from violence, unless assailed.

"The taking of Mekka was soon followed by the adhesion of all Arabia. Every reader knows the story of the spread of Islam. The tribes of every part of the peninsula sent embassies to do homage to the Prophet. Arabia was not enough : the Prophet had written in his bold uncompromising way to the great kings of the East, to the Persian Khusru, and the Greek Emperor ; and these little knew how soon his invitation to the faith would be repeated, and how quickly Islam would be knocking at their doors

with no faltering hand.”¹

When Mohammed saw men accepting Islam in troops he felt that his career was nearing its end.² He now resolved to perform a Farewell Pilgrimage to the city of his birth, and with this purpose left Medinah with nearly 1,40,000 people.

On his arrival at Mecca after completing the rites of pilgrimage Mohammed addressed the multitude from the top of Mount Arafat in solemn last words:

“O ye people, hearken to my words, for I know not whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you here again.

“Your blood and your wealth and your property are sacred [and inviolable amongst one another], even as this day of yours is sacred in this your city during this month of yours.

“The Lord has ordained to every man the share of his inheritance; a testament is not lawful to the prejudice of heirs.

¹ Lane-Poole.

² Koran, S. 110.

selves assist them in doing it.¹ Whoso among you beats his slave without fault or slaps him in the face, his atonement for this is freeing him; and mind ye that a man who behaves ill to his slave will be shut out from Paradise. Forgive thy slaves seventy times a day, for they are the servants of the Lord thy God and are not to be unjustly treated. Nothing pleases God more than the freeing of slaves.

"Ye shall surely meet your Lord, and He will ask you concerning your works. Take care! ye do not return to unbelief after I am gone, striking off the necks of one another among you.

"Let him who is present tell it to him who is absent; haply he that is told may remember better than he who has heard it."²

Then looking up to the heaven he cried, "O Lord! I have delivered my message and fulfilled my mission." And

¹ Cf. *Sayings*, 845.

² *Ib.*, 358, 629.

the multitude answered, "Yea, verily hast thou!" "O Lord, I beseech Thee, bear Thou witness to it!"

He now settled himself to organize the provinces and tribal communities which had accepted Islam. Missionary-officers were sent to the provinces and to the tribes for the purpose of instructing them more fully in the duties of Islam and administering justice. Muadh son of Jabal was sent to Yeman, and Mohammed's parting injunction to him is worthy of more than ordinary attention. He was asked by Mohammed by what rule he would be guided in his administration of that province. "By the law of the Koran," said Muadh.

"But if thou find no direction therein?"

"Then I will act according to the example of the Prophet."

"But if that fails?"

"Then I will exercise my own judgment."

Whereupon Mohammed approved highly of the answer of his disciple and

commended it to the other delegates.

To Ali, whom he deputed to Yemamah, he said: "When two parties come before thee for justice, do not decide before thou hast heard them both."

Soon after this the health of the Prophet continued to decline. At the news of his approaching end, two pretenders stood up claiming divine commission for their reign of licentiousness and plunder.

One of them even sent a letter to Mohammed offering to go halves with him. It ran thus:—

"From Moseilamah the Prophet of God to Mohammed the Prophet of God. I am your partner; the power must be divided between us: half the earth be mine, and the other half thine."

To which Mohammed sent a reply in the following memorable words: "From Mohammed the Prophet of God to Moseilamah the Liar. Peace be upon those who follow the straight path! The earth belongs to God alone: He bestows it upon whom He pleases. Only those prosper who fear the Lord!"

The Prophet though weak and feeble always presided at the public prayers until within three days of his death.

One day after his usual prayers, he thus addressed the multitude: "Moslems, if I have wronged any one of you, here am I to answer for it; if I owe anything to any one of you, I am here to repay the same."

Upon this, a man in the crowd reminded Mohammed of three dirhams of silver which he had given to a poor man at the Prophet's request, and was instantly repaid. "Better," said Mohammed, "to blush in this world than suffer in the next."

He then prayed fervently for the Moslems who had suffered for their faith, after which he addressed the Exiles of Mecca exhorting them to hold in honour the Helpers of Islam. "The number of believers," said he, "will increase, but that of the Helpers never can: they were my family with whom I found a home, they believed in me when I was persecuted by the world."

Mohammed's malady increased from day to day. On Friday, the day of religious assemblage, he requested Abu-Bakr to perform the public prayers. The appearance of Abu-Bakr in the pulpit caused great agitation among the Moslems, and a rumour was circulated that the Prophet was no more. On hearing the news, Mohammed exerted his remaining strength and leaning on the shoulders of Ali and Fadl, he made his way into the Mosque, "where his appearance," says the chronicler, "spread joy throughout the congregation." Abu-Bakr ceased to pray, but Mohammed bade him proceed, and after the prayers were over thus addressed the congregation. "I have heard," said he, "that a rumour of the death of your Prophet filled you with alarm; but has any prophet before me lived for ever that ye think I should not leave you? Everything has its appointed time which is not to be hastened nor avoided. I return to Him who sent me, and my last request to you is that ye remain united, that ye

love, honour, and uphold each other in what is reasonable, that ye exhort each other to faith and constancy in belief, and to the performance of righteous deeds : by these alone men proper—all else leads to destruction."

Another three days, and the Prophet was no more. 28th day of Safar¹ A.H. II. His burial took place on the 1st of Rabi I.

Mohammed is described as of middle stature, rather thin, but broad of shoulders, wide of chest, strong of bone and muscle. His head was capacious, well-shaped, and well-set on a neck which rose like a pillar from his ample chest. Dark hair, slightly curled, flowed in a dense mass almost to his shoulders. He had an oval face, slightly tawny of colour, marked and expressive features, a slightly aquiline nose, black eyes which shone out from under heavy eyelashes, a mouth large and flexible, indicative of

¹ This appears to be the correct date of Mohammed's death as it has been preserved to us by the people of his house.

eloquence; teeth, well-set and dazzling white. A full beard framed his manly face. His skin was clear and soft, his complexion ‘red and white,’ his hands were as ‘silk and satin,’ even as those of a woman. His step was quick and elastic, yet firm. In turning his face he would also turn his whole body. His whole gait and presence were dignified and imposing. His countenance was mild and pensive. His laugh was rarely more than a smile, which was of the most captivating sweetness.

In his habits he was extremely simple. His eating and drinking, his dress and his furniture retained even when he reached the plenitude of his power, their primitive simplicity.

“His constitution was extremely delicate. . . . Eminently unpractical in all common things of life, he was gifted with mighty powers of imagination, elevation of mind, delicacy and refinement of feeling. ‘He is more modest than a virgin behind her curtain,’ it was said of him. He was most indulgent to his

inferiors, and would never allow his awkward little page to be scolded whatever he did, ‘Ten years,’ said Anas, his servant, ‘was I about the Prophet, and he never said as much as “Uff” to me.’ He was very affectionate towards his family. One of his boys died on his breast in the smoky house of the nurse, a blacksmith’s wife. He was very fond of children; he would stop them in the streets and pat their little heads. He never struck any one in his life. The worst expression he ever made use of in conversation was, ‘Whas has come to him? May his forehead be darkened with mud!’ When asked to curse some one, he replied, ‘I have not been sent to curse but to be a mercy to mankind.’ ‘He visited the sick, followed any bier he met, accepted the invitation of a slave to dinner, mended his own clothes, milked the goats, and waited upon himself,’ relates summarily another tradition. He never first withdrew his hand out of another man’s palm, and turned not before the other had turned.

"He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence; those who came near him loved him; they who described him would say, 'I have never seen his like either before or after.' He was of great taciturnity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could forget what he said. He was, however, very nervous and restless withal; often low-spirited, downcast, as to heart and eyes. Yet he would at times suddenly break through these broodings, become gay, talkative, jocular, chiefly among his own. . . . He would romp with the children and play with their toys.

"He lived with his wives in a row of humble cottages, separated from one another by palm-branches, cemented together with mud. He would kindle the fire, sweep the floor, and milk the goats himself. The little food he had was always shared with those who dropped in the partake of it. . . . His ordinary

food was dates and water, or barley bread; milk and honey were luxuries of which he was fond, but which he rarely allowed himself. The fare of the desert seemed most congenial to him, even when he was sovereign of Arabia."¹

"There is something," says Lane-Poole, "so tender and womanly, and withal so heroic, about the man, that one is in peril of finding the judgment unconsciously blinded by the feeling of reverence and well-nigh love that such a nature inspires. He who, standing alone, braved for years the hatred of his people, is the same who was never the first to withdraw his hand from another's clasp; the beloved of children, who never passed a group of little ones without a smile from his wonderful eyes and a kind word for them, sounding all the kinder in that sweet-toned voice. The frank friendship, the noble generosity, the dauntless courage and hope of the man, all tend to melt criticism in admiration.

¹ Lane-Poole, *Speeches and Table-talk of the Prophet Mohammad.*

"He was an enthusiast in that noblest sense when enthusiasm becomes the salt of the earth, the one thing that keeps men from rotting whilst they live. Enthusiasm is often used despitefully, because it is joined to an unworthy cause, or falls upon barren ground and bears no fruit. So was it not with Mohammad. He was an enthusiast when enthusiasm was the one thing needed to set the world aflame, and his enthusiasm was noble for a noble cause. He was one of those happy few who have attained the supreme joy of making one great truth their very life-spring. He was the messenger of the one God; and never to his life's end did he forget who he was, or the message which was the marrow of his being. He brought his tidings to his people with a grand dignity sprung from the consciousness of his high office, together with a most sweet humility, whose roots lay in the knowledge of his own weakness."

On the graces and intellectual gifts of Nature to the son of Abdullah, the Arabian

writers dwell with the proudest and fondest satisfaction. His politeness to the great, his affability to the humble, and his dignified bearing to the presumptuous, procured him respect, admiration and applause. His talents were equally fitted for persuasion or command. Deeply read in the volume of Nature, though perhaps not much learned in letters, his mind could expand into controversy with the acutest of his enemies, or contract itself to the apprehension of the meanest of his disciples. His simple eloquence, rendered impressive by the expression of a countenance wherein awfulness of majesty was tempered by an amiable sweetness, excited emotions of veneration and love; and he was gifted with that authoritative air of genius which alike influences the learned and commands the illiterate. As a friend and a parent, he exhibited the softest feelings of our nature; but while in possession of the kind and generous emotions of the heart, and engaged in the discharge of most of the social and domestic duties, he

disgraced not his title of an apostle of God. With all that simplicity which is so natural to a great mind, he performed the humbler offices whose homeliness it would be idle to conceal with pompous diction. "God," say the Moslem writers, "offered him the keys of the treasures of the earth, but he would not accept them."

The question now occurs, Was he the unprincipled impostor that he has been so commonly represented? Were all his visions and revelations deliberate falsehoods, and was his whole system a tissue of deceit? "Our current hypothesis about Mahomet," said Carlyle, "that he was a scheming Impostor, a Falsehood incarnate, that his religion is a mere mass of quackery and fatuity, begins really to be now untenable to any one. The lies, which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man, are disgraceful to overselves only. When Pococke inquired of Grotius, where the proof

was of that story of the pigeon, trained to pick peas from Mahomet's ear, and pass for an angel dictating to him? Grotius answered that there was no proof. It is really time to dismiss all that. The word this man spoke has been the life-guidance now of a hundred-and-eighty millions of men these twelve-hundred years. These hundred-and-eighty millions were made by God as well as we. A greater number of God's creatures believe in Mahomet's word at this hour than in any other word whatever. Are we to suppose that it was a miserable piece of spiritual legerdemain, this which so many creatures of the Almighty have lived by and died by? I, for my part, cannot form any such supposition. I will believe most things sooner than that. One would be entirely at a loss what to think of this world at all, if quackery so grew and were sanctioned here.

“Alas, such theories are very lamentable. If we would attain to knowledge of anything in God's true Creation, let us disbelieve them wholly! They are

the product of an Age of Scepticism; they indicate the saddest spiritual paralysis, and mere death-life of the souls of men; more godless theory, I think, was never promulgated in this Earth. A false man found a religion? Why, a false man cannot build a brick house? If he do not know and follow *truly* the properties of mortar, burnt clay and what else he works in, it is no house that he makes, but a rubbish-heap. It will not stand for twelve centuries, to lodge a hundred-and-eighty millions; it will fall straightway. A man must conform himself to Nature's laws, *be* verily in communion with Nature and the truth of things, or Nature will answer him, No, not at all! Speciosities are specious—ah me!—a Cagliostro, many Cagliostros, prominent world-leaders, do prosper by their quackery, for a day. It is like a forged bank-note; they get it passed out of *their* worthless hands: others, not they, have to smart for it. Nature bursts up in fire-flames, French Revolutions and such-like, proclaiming with

terrible veracity that forged notes are forged.

"But of a Great Man especially, of him I will venture to assert that it is incredible he should have been other than true. . . .

"This Mahomet, then, we will in no wise consider as an Inanity and Theatricality, a poor conscious ambitious schemer; we cannot conceive him so. . . . The man's words were not false, nor his workings here below; no Inanity and Simulacrum; a fiery mass of Life cast up from the great bosom of Nature herself. To *kindle* the world; the world's Maker had ordered it so."¹

Let us endeavour to perceive what adequate object he could have to gain by the impious and stupendous imposture with which he stands charged. Was it riches? His marriage with Khadijah had already made him wealthy, and for years preceding his 'pretended vision' he had manifested no desire to increase his store.

¹ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History*, lecture ii.

Was it distinction? He already stood high in his native place as a man of intelligence and probity. He was of the illustrious tribe of the Koreish, and of the most honoured branch of that tribe. Was it power? The guardianship of the Kaabah, and with it the command of the sacred city, had been for generations in his immediate family, and his situation and circumstances entitled him to look forward with confidence to that exalted trust. In attempting to subvert the faith in which he had been brought up, he struck at the very root of all these advantages. On that faith were founded the fortunes and dignities of his family. To assail it must draw on himself the hostility of his kindred, the indignation of his fellow-citizens, and the horror and odium of all his country-men, who were worshippers at the Kaabah. Was there anything brilliant in the outset of his prophetic career to repay him for these sacrifices, and to lure him on? On the contrary, it was begun in doubt and secrecy. For years together it was

not attended by any material success. In proportion as he made known his doctrines and proclaimed his revelations, they subjected him to ridicule, scorn, obloquy, and finally to an inveterate persecution, which ruined the fortunes of himself and his friends, compelled some of his family and followers to take refuge in foreign land, obliged him to hide from sight in his native city, and drove him forth a fugitive to seek an uncertain home elsewhere. Why should he persist for years in a course of imposture which was thus prostrating all his worldly fortunes at a time of life when it was too late to build them up anew?¹

“ Ah no :” says Carlyle, “this deep-hearted Son of the Wilderness, with his beaming black eyes and open social deep soul, had other thoughts than ambition. A silent great man ; he was one of those who cannot *but* be in earnest ; whom Nature herself has appointed to be sin-

¹ These are some of the remarks of Washington Irving, *Life of Mahomet*.

INTRODUCTION

cere. While others walk in formulas and hearsays, contented enough to dwell there, this man could not screen himself in formulas; he was alone with his own soul and the reality of things. The great Mystery of Existence, as I said, glared-in upon him, with its terrors, with its splendours; no hearsays could hide that unspeakable fact, 'Here am I!' Such *sincerity*, as we named it, has in very truth something of divine. The word of such a man is a Voice direct from Nature's own Heart. Men do and must listen to that as to nothing else; —all else is wind in comparison. From of old, a thousand thoughts, in his pilgrimings and wanderings, had been in this man: What am I? What *is* this unfathomable Thing I live in, which men name Universe? What is Life; what is Death? What am I to believe? What am I to do? The grim rocks of Mount Hara, of Mount Sinai, the stern sandy solitudes answered not. The great Heaven rolling silent overhead, with its blue-glancing stars, answered not. There

was no answer. The man's own soul, and what of God's inspiration dwelt there, had to answer!"

"And what have been the effects of the system which, established by such instrumentality, Mohammad has left behind him? We may freely concede, that it banished for ever many of the darker elements of superstition for ages shrouding the Peninsula. Idolatry vanished before the battle-cry of Islam; the doctrine of the Unity and infinite perfections of God, and of a special all-pervading Providence, became a living principle in the hearts and lives of the followers of Mohammad, even as in his own. An absolute surrender and submission to the divine will (the idea embodied in the very name of *Islam*) was demanded as the first requirement of the faith. Nor are social virtues wanting. Brotherly love is inculcated towards all within the circle of the faith; infanticide proscribed; orphans to be protected, and

slaves treated with consideration ; intoxicating drinks prohibited, so that Mohammadanism may boast of a degree of temperance unknown to any other creed.”¹

“The aim of Mahomet,” says the Rev. Stephens, “was to revive among his countrymen the Arabs, as Moses revived among his countrymen the Jews, the pure faith of their common fore-father Abraham. In this he succeeded to a very great extent. For a confused heap of idolatrous superstitions he substituted a pure monotheistic faith; he abolished some of the most vicious practices of his countrymen, modified others; he generally raised the moral standard, improved the social condition of the people, and introduced a sober and rational ceremonial in worship. Finally, he welded by this means a number of wild and independent tribes, mere floating atoms, into a compact body politic, as well prepared and as

eager to subdue the kingdoms of the world to their rule and to their faith, as ever the Israelites had been to conquer the land of Canaan.¹

* * *

“The Koran also enjoins repeatedly and in very emphatic language the duty of showing kindness to the stranger and the orphan, and of treating slaves, if converted to the faith, with the consideration and respect due to believers. The duty of mercy to the lower animals is not forgotten, and it is to be thankfull acknowledged that Mahometanism as well as Buddhism shares with Christianity the honour of having given birth to hospitals and asylums for the insane and sick.²

* * *

“The vices most prevalent in Arabia in the time of Mahomet which are most sternly denounced and absolutely forbidden in the Koran were drunken-

¹ W. R. W. Stephens, *Christianity and Islam: the Bible and the Koran*; p. 94. London 1877.

² *Ibid.*, p. 104.

ness, unlimited concubinage and polygamy, the destruction of female infants, reckless gambling, extortionate usury, superstitious arts of divination and magic. The abolition of some of these evil customs, and the mitigation of others, was a great advance in the morality of the Arabs, and is a wonderful and honourable testimony to the zeal and influence of the reformer. The total suppression of female infanticide and of drunkenness is the most signal triumph of his work."¹

"First of all," continues the writer we are quoting, "it must be freely granted that to his own people Mahomet was a great benefactor. He was born in a country where political organization and rational faith and pure morals were unknown. He introduced all three. By a single stroke of masterly genius he simultaneously reformed the political condition, the religious creed, and the moral practice of his countrymen. In the place of

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

many independent tribes he left a nation; for a superstitious belief in gods many and lords many he established a reasonable belief in one Almighty yet benevolent Being; taught men to live under an abiding sense of this Being's superintending care, to look to Him as the rewarder, and to fear Him as the punisher of evil-doers. He vigorously attacked, and modified and suppressed many gross and revolting customs which had prevailed in Arabia down to his time. For an abandoned profligacy was substituted a carefully regulated polygamy, and the practice of destroying female infants was effectually abolished.

"As Islam gradually extended its conquest beyond the boundaries of Arabia, many barbarous races whom it absorbed became in like manner participators in its benefits. The Turk, the Indian, the Negro, and the Moor were compelled to cast away their idols, to abandon their licentious rites and customs, to turn to the worship of one God, to a decent ceremonial and an orderly way of life.

The faith even of the more enlightened Persian was purified: he learned that good and evil are not co-ordinate powers, but that just and unjust are alike under the sway of one All-wise and Holy Ruler, who ordereth all things in heaven and earth.

“For barbarous nations, then, especially nations which were more or less in the condition of Arabia itself at the time of Mahomet—nations in the condition of Africa at the present day, with little or no civilisation, and without a reasonable religion—Islam certainly comes as a blessing, as a turning from darkness to light and from the power of satan unto God.”¹

Another Christian writer² thus expresses himself:—

“On the other hand, to those who are prepared to shake off superstitions, Mohammedanism offers a very rational religion. The reign of uniform law in

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129, 130.

In *The Asiatic Quarterly Review*, October 1888.

the natural world is expressed in the unity of God—one over-ruling Providence. The high character attributes of the great God are recognised by the total abolition of all the forms of worship which presume deity of human tastes and passions—not only images and paintings, but music and ecclesiasticism of all kinds go by the board. There is nothing but a simple rational worship, in or out of simple edifices. Decency and sobriety of life are inculcated, drink is prohibited, the equality of man is preached in an attractive form, and good conduct in this world is rewarded by an intelligible Paradise in the next.¹ Such a religion commends itself very readily to people in want of a faith.

* * *

“ Mohammedanism came upon the world as a kind of reformed Christianity—a protest against the corruption of Christianity—a purer faith founded on the old models, a return to the old standards.

¹ In this world as in the next.

. . . But it had all the reasonableness in contrast to the gross superstition of the age which has already been attributed to it, and brought out, as it were, by a very enterprising and enthusiastic people, it is to be hardly wondered that it had a great success. . . . When the Mohammedans annexed the civilised countries of Graeco-Roman Empire they also inherited the civilisation and learning of that Empire. Hence it was that they gave to the world not only a better religion, but laws, science, and literature, when our ancestors were still quite barbarous. Thus everything facilitated their constant progress for upwards of a thousand years after the institution of the Mohammedan religion, and they still progress in the less civilised regions of the earth."

"It is very difficult to say," continues the writer, "exactly what the Mohammedan religion is. . . . Certainly, it seems to be very effective in rendering men's lives and manners outwardly decent and respectable. It has this very great ad-

vantage, that having no difficult creed, exacting no beliefs *prima facie* repulsive to reason and commonsense, there is among Mohammedans very little tendency towards infidelity. . .

“Probably it is to the prohibition of the use of alcohol that the outward decency of Mohammedans, as compared to Christians, is due. It is drink that debases and degrades so large a part of our lower Christian populations. We not only have no prohibition of drink, but we in some sort sanctify it by its use in our so-called sacraments. That use of wine as representing the blood of Christ (to which we attribute such extraordinary virtue) is not only a very low form of superstition, but greatly increases the difficulty of dealing with the liquor question.”

“It cannot be said,” adds the writer pertinently, “that Mohammedans never drink, but they really rarely do so. It cannot be said that there are not many bad Mohammedans given to many vices, especially among semi-converted races

of a rude character ; but, take them all in all, the population of civilised Mohammedan countries have a comparatively decorous mien and manner. Their faults are those principally of the ages in which Mohammedanism was matured, while our virtues are rather those of our age than of our religion."

The following remarks of Canon Isaac Taylor at the Church Congress, Wolverhampton, may also be read with interest by all candid readers :—

"The Rev. Canon Isaac Taylor said that over a large portion of the world Islamism as a missionary religion is more successful than Christianity. (*Sensation.*) Not only are the Moslem converts from paganism more numerous than the Christian converts, but Christianity in some regions is actually receding before Islam, while attempts to proselytise Mohammedan nations are notoriously unsuccessful. We not only do not gain ground, but even fail to hold our own. The faith of Islam extends from Morocco to Java, from Zanzibar to China, and

is spreading across Africa with giant strides. It has acquired a footing on the Congo and the Zambesi, while Uganda, the most powerful of the negro states, has just become Mohammedan. In India, western civilization which is sapping Hindooism, only prepares the way for Islam. Of the 255 millions in India, 50 millions are already Moslems, and of the whole population of Africa more than half. It is not the first propagation of Islam that has to be explained, but it is the permanency with which it retains its hold upon its converts. Christianity is less tenacious in its grasp. While in India and Africa it is receding before Islam, and in Jamaica the negroes, nominally Christian, are lapsing into Oboeism, it may be affirmed that an African tribe, once converted to Islam, never reverts to paganism, and never embraces Christianity. . . .

“Islam has done more for civilization than Christianity. I confess I am somewhat suspicious of the accounts of missionaries; but take the statements of English

officials, or of lay travellers, such as Burton, Pope Hennessy, Galton, Palgrave, Thompson, or Reade, as to the practical results of Islam. When Mohammedanism is embraced by a negro tribe, paganism, devil-worship, fetishism, cannibalism, human-sacrifice, infanticide, witchcraft, at once disappear. The natives begin to dress, filth is replaced by cleanliness, and they acquire personal dignity and self-respect. Hospitality becomes a religious duty, drunkenness becomes rare, gambling is forbidden, immodest dances and the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes cease, female chastity is regarded as a virtue, industry replaces idleness, licence gives place to law, order and sobriety prevail, blood-feuds, cruelty to animals and to slaves, are forbidden. A feeling of humanity, benevolence and brotherhood is inculcated. Polygamy and slavery are regulated and their evils are restrained. Islam, above all, is the most powerful total abstinence association in the world, whereas the extension of European trade means the extension of drunkenness and

vice, and the degradation of the people; while Islam introduces a civilization of no low order, including a knowledge of reading and writing, decent clothing, personal cleanliness, veracity and self-respect. Its restraining and civilizing effects are marvellous. How little have we to show for the vast sums of money and all the precious lives lavished upon Africa! Christian converts are reckoned by thousands, Moslem converts by millions. These are the stern facts we have to face. They are extremely unpleasant facts; it is folly to ignore them. . . Islam was a replica of the faith of Abraham and Moses, with Christian elements. Judaism was exclusive. Islam is cosmopolitan—not like Judaism, confined to one race, but extended to the whole world. . . There is nothing in the teaching of Mohammed antagonistic to Christianity. It is midway between Judaism and Christianity. This reformed Judaism swept so swiftly over Africa and Asia because the African and Syrian doctors had substituted meta-

physical dogmas for the religion of Christ. They tried to combat licentiousness by celibacy and virginity. Seclusion from the world was the road to holiness, and dirt was the characteristic of monkish sanctity. The people were practically polytheists, worshipping a crowd of martyrs, saints and angels. Islam swept away this mass of corruption and superstition. It was a revolt against empty theological polemics; it was a masculine protest against the exaltation of celibacy as a crown of piety. It brought out the fundamental dogma of religion—the unity and greatness of God. It replaced monkliness by manliness. It gave hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition to the fundamental facts of human nature. . . . The virtues which Islam inculcates are what the lower races can be brought to understand—temperance, cleanliness, chastity, justice, fortitude, courage, benevolence, hospitality, veracity, and resignation. They can be taught to cultivate the four cardinal virtues, and to abjure the seven

deadly sins. The Christian *ideal* of the brotherhood of man is the highest; but Islam preaches a *practical* brotherhood—the social equality of all Moslems. This is the great bribe which Islam offers. The convert is admitted at once to an exclusive social caste: he becomes a member of a vast confraternity of 150,000,000. A Christian convert is not regarded as a social equal, but the Moslem brotherhood is a reality. We have overmuch 'dearly beloved brethren' in the reading desk, but very little in daily life. . . .

"Let us remember that in some respects Moslem morality is better than our own. In resignation to God's will, in temperance, charity, veracity, and in the brotherhood of believers, they set us a pattern we should do well to follow. Islam has abolished drunkenness, gambling, and prostitution—the three curses of Christian lands."¹

Is it possible to conceive, we may

¹ This was reported in, among other papers, *The Times*, and *St. James' Gazette*, London, October 8, 1887.

ask, that the man who effected such great and lasting reforms in his own country by substituting the worship of the one God for the gross and debasing idolatry in which his countrymen had been plunged for ages; who raised the moral standard of his countrymen, ameliorated the condition of women, curtailed and mitigated polygamy and slavery, and virtually abolished them as well as infanticide; who most sternly denounced and absolutely forbade all the heinous evils of the Arab society; who infused vitality into a dormant people, consolidated a congeries of warring tribes into a nation inspired into action with the hope of everlasting life; who 'concentrated into a focus all the fragmentary and broken lights which had ever fallen on the heart of man;' who performed his work with an enthusiasm and fervour which admitted no compromise, conceived no halting, with indomitable courage which brooked no resistance, allowed no fear of consequences, with a singleness of purpose which thought of no self—

can we, we repeat, conceive so great and zealous a reformer to have been a mere impostor, or that his whole career was one of sheer hypocrisy? Can we imagine that his divine mission was a mere invention of his own of whose falsehood he was conscious throughout? Is not the theory of imposture refuted alike by his unwavering belief in the truth of his own mission, by the loyalty and unshaken confidence of his companions who had ample opportunity of forming a right estimate of his sincerity, and finally, by the magnitude of the task which he brought to so successful an issue? May we not say that no impostor could have accomplished so mighty a work, that no one unsupported by a living faith in the reality of his commission, in the goodness of his cause, could have maintained the same consistent attitude through long years of adverse fortune, alike in the day of victory and in the hour of defeat, in the plenitude of his power and at the moment of death?

"But so far," remarked Dr. Leitner, "as I know anything either of Judaism or of Christianity, the system preached by Muhammad was not merely imitative or eclectic; it was also 'inspired'—if there be such a process as inspiration from the Source of all goodness. Indeed, I venture to state in all humility, that if self-sacrifice, honesty of purpose, unwavering belief in one's mission, a marvellous insight into existing wrong or error, and the perception and use of the best means for their removal, are among the outward and visible signs of inspiration, the mission of Muhammad was 'inspired.'"¹

The Rev. Dr. Marcus Dods' remarks are equally just:—

"But is Mohammed in no sense a prophet? Certainly he had two of the most important characteristics of the prophetic order. He saw truth about God which his fellow-men did not see,

¹ G. W. Leitner, LL.D. PH. D., D. O. L., *Muhammadanism*, p. 4. Working, 1889.

and he had an irresistible inward impulse to publish this truth. In respect of this latter qualification, Mohammed may stand in comparison with the most courageous of the heroic prophets of Israel. For the truth's sake he risked his life, he suffered daily persecution for years, and eventually banishment, the loss of property, of the goodwill of his fellow-citizens, and of the confidence of his friends; he suffered, in short, as much as any man can suffer short of death, which he only escaped by flight, and yet he unflinchingly proclaimed his message. No bribe, threat, or inducement, could silence him. 'Though they array against me the sun on the right hand and the moon on the left, I cannot renounce my purpose.' And it was this persistency, this belief in his call, to proclaim the unity of God, which was the making of Islam.

"Other men have been monotheists in the midst of idolaters, but no other man has founded a strong and enduring monotheistic religion. The distinction in

his case was his resolution that other men should believe. If we ask what it was that made Mohammed aggressive and proselytizing, where other men had been content to cherish a solitary faith, we must answer that it was nothing else than the depth and force of his own conviction of the truth. To himself the difference between one God and many, between the unseen Creator and these ugly lumps of stone or wood, was simply infinite. The one creed was death and darkness to him, the other life and light. . . . Who can doubt the earnestness of that search after truth and the living God, that drove the affluent merchant from his comfortable home and his fond wife, to make his abode for months at a time in the dismal cave on Mount Hira? If we respect the shrinking of Isaiah or Jeremiah from the heavy task of proclaiming unwelcome truth, we must also respect the keen sensitiveness of Mohammed, who was so burdened by this same responsibility, and so persuaded of his incompetency for the task, that

at times he thought his new feelings and thoughts were a snare of the Devil, and at times he would fain have rid himself of all further struggle by casting himself from a friendly precipice. . . .

"His giving himself out as a prophet of God was, in the first instance, not only sincere, but probably correct in the sense in which he himself understood it."¹

"Head of the State as well as of the Church," says the Rev. Bosworth-Smith, "he was Cæsar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Cæsar without the legions of Cæsar. Without a standing army, without a body-guard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue, if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by a right divine, it was Mohammed, for he had all the power without its instruments, and without its supports.

"By a fortune absolutely unique in history, Mohammed is a three-fold founder—of a nation, of an empire, and of a

¹ Dods, *Mohammed, Buddha, and Christ*, pp. 17,

religion. Illiterate himself, scarcely able to read or write,¹ he was yet the author of a book which is a poem, a code of laws, a Book of Common Prayer, and a Bible in one, and is reverenced to this day by a sixth of the whole human race, as a miracle of purity of style, of wisdom and of truth. It was the one miracle claimed by Mohammed—his standing miracle he called it; and a miracle indeed it is. But looking at the circumstances of the time, at the unbounded reverence of his followers, and comparing him with the Fathers of the Church or with mediaeval saints, to my mind, the most miraculous thing about Mohammed is, that he never claimed the power of working miracles. Whatever he had said he could do, his disciples would straightway have seen him do. They could not help attributing to him miraculous acts which he never did, and which he always denied he could do. What more crowning proof of his sincerity

¹ This is not a fact. See *Apology*, pp. 50 ff., note.

is needed? Mohammed to the end of his life claimed for himself that title only with which he had begun, and which the highest philosophy and the truest Christianity will one day, I venture to believe, agree in yielding to him, that of a Prophet, a very Prophet of God.”¹

NOTE.

“Many of the events of Mohammad’s life have been distorted and credited with ignoble motives by European biographers. . . . But there are some things in the Prophet’s life,” says Mr. Lane-Poole, “which have given rise to charges too weighty to be dismissed without discussion. He has been accused of cruelty, sensuality, and insincerity; he has been called a ‘bloodthirsty tyrant,’ a voluptuary, and ‘an impostor.’”

“The charge of cruelty,” he says, “scarcely deserves consideration. I have

¹ Bosworth-Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. 340.

already spoken of the punishment of the Jews, which forms the ground of the accusation. One has but to refer to Mohammad's conduct to the prisoners after the battle of Bedr, to his patient tolerance towards his enemies at Medina, his gentleness to his people, his love of children and the dumb creatures, and above all, his bloodless entry into Mekka, and the complete amnesty he gave to those who had been his bitter enemies during eighteen years of insult and persecution and finally open war, to show that cruelty was no part of Mohammad's nature."

" . . . The simple austerity of his daily life, to the very last, his hard mat for sleeping on, his plain food, his self-imposed menial work, point him out as an ascetic rather than a voluptuary in most senses of the word. Two things he loved, perfumes and women ; the first was harmless enough, and the special case of his wives has its special answer. A great deal too much has been said about these wives. It is a melancholy spectacle to see pro-

fessedly Christian biographers gloating over the stories and fables of Mohammad's domestic relations like the writers and readers of 'society' journals."¹

"But," says the learned writer we are quoting, "be it remembered that, with his unlimited power, he need not have restricted himself to a number insignificant compared with the hareems of some of his successors, that he never divorced one of his wives, that all of them save one were widows, and that one of these widows was endowed with so terrific a temper that Aboo-Bekr and Othman had already politely declined the honour of her alliance before the Prophet married her: the gratification of living with a vixen cannot surely be excessive. Several of these marriages must have been entered into from the feeling that those women whose husbands had fallen in battle for the faith, and who had thus been left unprotected, had a claim upon the generosity of him who

¹ Jane-Poole.

prompted the fight. Other marriages were contracted from motives of policy, in order to conciliate the heads of rival factions. . . . Perhaps the strongest reason—one of which it is impossible to over-estimate the force—that impelled Mohammad to take wife after wife was his desire for male offspring. It was a natural wish that he should have a son who should follow in his steps and carry on his work;¹ but the wish was never gratified, Mohammad's sons died young. After all, the overwhelming argument is his fidelity to his first wife. When he was little more than a boy he married Khadeejeh, who was fifteen

¹ "There is, indeed," says Sir William, "no ground for supposing that Mohammad ever contemplated the succession of princely office in his own family. The prophetic dignity was personal, and his political authority exercised solely in virtue of it. But he regarded his children with a loving and partial eye; he no doubt also rejoiced in the prospect, dear to every Arab, of having his name and memory perpetuated by male issue; and he might naturally expect that his son would be cherished and honoured by all followers of Islam." (*Lif*, p. 429. Weir's ed.)

years older than himself, with all the added age that women gain so quickly in the East. For five-and-twenty years Mohammad remained faithful to his elderly wife, and when she was sixty-five, and they might have celebrated their 'silver wedding,' he was as devoted to her as when first he married her. During all those years there was never a breath of scandal. Thus far Mohammad's life will bear microscopic scrutiny. Then Khadeejeh died; and though he married many women afterwards, some of them rich in youth and beauty, he never forgot his old wife, and loved her best to the end: 'when I was poor she enriched me, when they called me a liar she alone believed in me, when all the world was against me she alone remained true.' This loving, tender memory of an old wife laid in the grave belongs only to a noble nature; it is not to be looked for in a voluptuary."¹

It is, of course, a fact that after the

¹ Introduction to Lane's *Selections from the Kur-an*, pp. lxx-lxxii.

death of Khadijah, Mohammed, like any other man (whether professed convert or not) during that period, took several wives, until the promulgation by him of the following :—

Ye may marry what women seem agreeable to you, twos and threes and fours; but if ye fear that ye shall not act equitably (between them), then one only, or what your right hands have already come to possess [as wives]; that is the chief thing, that ye act not partially.¹

Mohammed then had *already* nine wives. He therefore offered them the alternative of either gracefully separating themselves from him and enjoying life and its immediate good which was denied them so long as they were with him and saving themselves the privation and hardship that such a life entailed, or remaining with him and practising benevolence in weal and woe for a yet higher recompense from God.² But sooner than leave the companionship of their beloved master, they unanimously pref-

¹ Koran, S. 4. 3.

² S. 33. 28, 29.

erred to live with him. Could he not then use his husband's prerogative of divorcing some even though they may not like it? But it would be obviously unfair to deal thus with those loving souls who, at the sacrifice of all their worldly comforts, had persisted in throwing in their lot with him. In order therefore

that their eyes might rejoice, and they grieve not, the while they are pleased with what thou dost give each of them,¹

it became the imperative duty of Mohammed to retain all his wives. The utmost he could do at this stage was *to refrain from marrying any more, even on the demise of some or all of them.* This he imposed upon himself as a rule.² Surely this is *not*, as has been said, that "whilst the Prophet allowed his followers only four wives he took more than a dozen himself."³

These wives are thus enumerated in the Koran:

¹ S. 33. 51.

² S. 33. 52.

³ Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole.

- (i) His wives to whom he had given their dower; such were Saudah, Ayesah, Hafsa, and Zeinab, daughter of Jahsh;
- (ii) His wives from among his enemies; such were Safyah and Juweiriah;
- (iii) His wives from among his near relations who were estranged from their people because of their faith and had been forced to fly from Mecca helpless fugitives; such were Hind (Umm Salamah) and Ramlah (Umm Habibah);
- (iv) His wives who had offered themselves to him without consideration of a dower; such were Meimunah and Zeinab, daughter Khozeimah.

All these were to be retained by Mohammed as "lawful" wives. And this was a provision

specially for thee, not for the faithful,—
We know what We have enjoined upon them concerning their wives and what their right hands have already come to possess [as wives]

—that there may be no scruples to thee.¹

In fact, Mohammed required no special provision for himself in law above that conceded to his followers, and as provided in his own law,

then one only, or what your right hands have already come to possess [as wives],²

he did but keep his own law in retaining them. Under the provisions of S. 33. 50 Mohammed could no more relax it in his favour. This last was, in law, to Mohammed, a mere conscience clause; otherwise there was nothing in it that was not at the time equally lawful to his followers; for while the law restrained his followers from unbounded polygamy, which was then the order of the day, they were by no means required to separate themselves from the wives already in their possession whose number exceeded that of the law, as I have shown above. Mohammed's developed law was in favour of monogamy, but it wisely provided for

¹ S. 33. 50. This has been referred to in a note by the Rev. Bosworth-Smith as Sura xxxiii. 49. See below.

² S. 4. 3.

circumstances, grave circumstances, under which an individual might, by way of duty, have more wives and yet deserve no opprobrium of the society ; for which reason, I may add, not one of the great world-teachers ever condemned polygamy or so much as attempted to put a restriction upon it.

"The limitation to the unbounded license of Oriental polygamy which he (Mohammed) had himself imposed," says another gentle writer, "he relaxes in his own behalf;¹ it is a blot, and, in the Christian view,² an indelible blot, upon his memory."³

"When, however, all has been said, when it has been shown that Mohammad was not the rapacious voluptuary some have taken him for, . . . there remains the fact," says Mr. Lane-Poole, "that some of the soorahs of the Kur-an bear unmistakable marks of self-accommodation

¹ "Sura xxxiii. 49, and lxvi. 1."

² *Sic.*

³ R. Bosworth-Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, p. 114. 3rd edn. 1889.

and personal convenience ; that Mohammad justified his domestic excesses (*sic*) by words which he gave as from God. And hence the third and gravest charge, the charge of imposture. We must clearly understand what is meant by this accusation. It is meant that the Prophet *consciously* fabricated speeches, and palmed them off upon the people as the very word of God. . . . The question is clearly narrowed to this: Did Mohammad believe he was speaking the words of God equally when he declared that permission was given him to take unto him more wives, as when he proclaimed ‘There is no God but God’?”

I believe I have clearly shown in what I have said above that Mohammed *never* broke his own law, nor declared that any such permission was given him ; and, in fact, what could have driven Mohammed to put a limitation to the unbounded license of Oriental polygamy, alike approved and blessed by Jehovah, and consecrated by the chosen people of all nations (including European Chris-

tians upto very recent times), if indeed he were minded to play the libertine? Surely it was *not* the better to satisfy his own lust. He might still emulate David in the matter, and yet be “the man after God’s own heart.”¹

But to revert to Rev. Bosworth-Smith’s note. I have shown above what S. 33. 49 refers to. S. 66. 1 refers to a certain matter which the Prophet had confided to one of his wives and who, in her turn, had abused his confidence. (ver. 3.) The Prophet, it appears, was sorely grieved at this, and perhaps had sworn off from her; which occasioned this passage. Under great provocation, the Prophet had sworn off from his wife, but as an indulgent husband, it behoved him to be reconciled at once. For was not God pardoning and compassionate? “Would ye not that God should pardon you?”² was his message to his followers on a yet more provocative occasion. Will not then His apostle forgive his wife? Against a like vow was

¹ 2 Sam. 5. 13 ; 12. 8 ; 20. 3.

² S. 24. 22.

already directed S. 2. 224-26. Will not the Prophet consider? Such is the burden of S. 66. I ff. I give it here below:

O thou Prophet! why forbiddest thyself what God has made lawful to thee? Thou hast been seeking the pleasure of thy wives, [and yet canst not forgive one of them]! But God is pardoning, compassionate.

God has allowed you (Moslems) the expiation of your oaths; and God is your Master, and He is the Knowing, the Wise.

What the matter actually was we shall never know, and we need not: but there can be no doubt it was one of political importance in Mohammed's then embarrassing situation at Medinah (ver. 4, 6, 9.) We have no authority to say it refers to anything relating to the myth of a "Mary the Coptic," or to any other incident mentioned by the uncritical commentators of the Koran or by the equally deluded biographers of Mohammed.¹ Strange to say, that the above passages which bespeak Mohammed's self-control even under grave provocation, and his

¹ The whole has been discussed at length in my *Mohammed at the Bar of the Twentieth Century* (ready for the press).

forgiving disposition at all times have been construed to calumniate him !

Perhaps I should here also touch upon the subject of Mohammed's marriage with Zeinab, the divorced wife of Zeid, as it has also furnished a handle of attack to the European critics. Some time before his marriage with Khadijah, a young man of the name of Zeid was brought as a captive to Mecca by a party of freebooters, and sold to a nephew of Khadijah, who presented the young lad to her. Mohammed, on his marriage, obtained Zeid as a gift from his wife, and immediately set him free. Some years afterwards, when Zeid's father heard where his son was, he took a journey to Mecca and offered a considerable sum for his ransom, because in pre-Islamic times, notwithstanding that a man had granted free emancipation to his slave, he still retained the right of ownership over him, and could sell that right at his pleasure. But Mohammed refused to receive any money, and only said : "Let Zeid come hither, and if he chooses

to go with you, how shall I keep him? take him without ransom; but if he chooses to remain with me, why should I not keep him?" And Zeid being come, declared that he would stay with his master and benefactor who treated him more kindly than a father his only son; with which the father acquiesced, and returned home well satisfied.

The features of Zeid at this time are thus described: He was about twenty years of age; of small stature, and dark in complexion, with a short and depressed nose.¹

Mohammed, however, conceived a great affection and esteem for this negro-boy. Soon after he reached Medinah, Mohammed set about to arrange for the marriage of Zeid to his own first cousin Zeinab, daughter of Jahsh, but received a repulse from her people. Themselves belonging to the noblest branch of the Koreish, they would not give their daughter in marriage to a freedman. They however, offered to give her in marriage

¹ Muir, *Life*, p. 32. Edn. 1877.

to Mohammed, which at the time he refused. He preached the brotherhood of believers, and refused to recognise any distinction between man and man. Man was to him "only a pious believer or a wicked sinner."¹ His was not the cant and rant, no hypocrisy about him; he would have no time-servers in his rank, he had no time or taste for platitudes. Religion was his life, and he lived it. Against his own paternal uncle and aunt (Zeinab's parents), therefore, the following was directed :

It is not for the faithful, men or women, when God and His apostle have decided an affair, that they should have the choice in their affair; and whoso rebels against God and His apostle, he has erred with a manifest error.²

To this stern demand, therefore, they submitted, and Zeinab was married to Zeid.

The marriage, however, proved very unhappy. Some years elapsed, and Zeinab was very recalcitrant : her marriage with a

¹ *Sayings*, 792.

² Koran, S. 33. 36.

freedman rankled in her breast. Mutual aversion at last culminated in disgust: Zeid came to the decision not to live any longer with her, and with this determination he went to Mohammed, and expressed his intention of being separated. "Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear God," was Mohammed's admonition to him.¹

But from this moment it was clear that the relation of Zeid and Zeinab could not last long; and it became a cause for grave anxiety to Mohammed. He had arranged the marriage when the people of Zeinab were averse to it, and now he was to be the cause of disgrace to the family. Not long after, his apprehensions proved too true: Zeid divorced Zeinab.

The position of Mohammed at this juncture may well be imagined. In fact, he was responsible for this "unequal" union in a world divided by colour and caste, which had extinguished the last

¹ S. 33. 37.

spark of the human instinct of love and affection; and he certainly owed it to her people, who were now more than humiliated and disgraced by this divorce of their daughter by a freedman, which must have touched their sense of honour and not a little injured them in the eyes of their people, to undo all by manfully coming forward to accept the hand of Zeinab; and amidst the great rejoicing of her people Mohammed married Zeinab.

The grace of God to Zeid, Mohammed's affectionate treatment of him in marrying him to his own first cousin, his solicitation for his nuptial happiness, his anxiety for the unhappy end in sight, his own responsibility in the marriage, and lastly, the divorce of Zeinab and his own marriage with her to retrieve for her family a lost prestige, as also to remove an arbitrary pre-Islamic restriction against the marriage of a man with the divorced wife of one whom he had *called* a son, as also to show that there was nothing derogatory in a marriage connexion with a freedman—all this forms the subject

of Surah 33. 37, 38.

Here also there were no “domestic excesses,” no “self-accommodation,” and no “personal convenience.” Neither was this “the subject of an inspired message in which the Prophet’s scruples were rebuked by God, a divorced permitted, and marriage with the object of his unhallowed desires enjoined.”¹

In the case before us, Mohammed erred if he erred at all, in setting himself to defy the old landmarks of Arab tribe and family by proposing an “unequal” marriage; but this hazardous step was more than atoned for by his magnificent enunciation of those very eternal truths,

¹ Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, vol. iv. p. 318. Elsewhere he admits that “this verse is rather in a recitative style of a past event,” (*Life*, vol. iii. p. 229, foot-note); and not a special command to marry Zeinab.

“Anyhow,” says Rev. Bosworth-Smith, “it is certain that Zeid, if he had suspected, as Christians have done, anything in the nature of an intrigue on the Prophet’s part to alienate his wife’s affection from him, could not have served him as he did even to the day of his death with all the loyalty and devotion of a zealous disciple.”

upon which lay the foundation-stone of his religious edifice, which found expression in his marriage with an ill-fated woman.

An Apology for Mohamed

Preamb

PERHAPS in no previous period had the empire of the Persians, or the oriental part of the Roman empire, been in a more deplorable or unhappy state than at the beginning of the seventh century. In consequence of the weakness of the Byzantine despots, the whole frame of their government was in a state of complete disorganization ; and in consequence of the most frightful abuses and corruption of the priests, the Christian religion had fallen into a state of degradation scarcely at this day conceivable, and such as would be absolutely incredible had we not evidence of it the most unquestionable. The feuds and animosities of the almost innumerable sects had risen to the greatest possible height; the whole frame of society was loosened ; the towns and

cities flowed with blood. Well, indeed, had Jesus prophesied when he said he brought not peace, but a sword. Husband against wife, children against parents, every house divided against itself—all domestic peace destroyed, and destroyed, too, about the most childish and unimportant, yet the most abstruse and unintelligible points of faith, creating disputes which were in their very nature interminable. At this time, in a remote and almost unknown corner of Arabia, at a distance from the civil broils which were tearing to pieces the Roman empire, arose the religion of Mohamed, a religion destined to sweep like a tornado over the face of the earth, to carry before it empires, kingdoms, and systems, and to scatter them like dust before the wind.

2. I know no man concerning whom it is more difficult to form an opinion than of Mohamed, the celebrated prophet of Arabia. Bigotry on one side, and malice on the other, have so obscured the history of this extraordinary person, that it is very difficult to come to a certainty as to the truth of most circumstances res-

pecting him. The facts stated to his *disadvantage* by Christians, it is clear on sound reasoning, can no more be admitted as evidence against him, than those can against Jesus Christ stated by Jews; unless in each case this exceptionable evidence by some other means receive confirmation. On the same principle, the facts stated of Mohamed to his *advantage* in the Koran, taken by themselves, cannot be relied on. But if we find any facts there stated which are *disadvantageous* to him, according to the tenets or opinions of his immediate followers who compiled that book, these statements, I think, will be evidence; because they will, in fact, come from unwilling witnesses. Thus again, I think, that such assertions respecting him as are agreed to equally by Jews, Christians, and Mohamedans, may be received.

3. But it will, perhaps, be said, that if thus the historical facts respecting him be pruned away, nothing will be left. Is it not better to have nothing, than to have that which is false? But I think the consequence will not go so far. We shall have

left much that is neither particularly good nor bad, but for the truth of which we shall have a strong probability; particularly if it be not contradicted, but assented to *sub silentio*, by his enemies, and be in itself probable and consistent with his general character, that of those about him, and the circumstances of the times—and I may add also, consistent with the general character of human nature, which we learn from experience. But yet these facts will not be proved like those in which both friends and enemies agree, and the distinction ought to be carefully remembered. Besides these, there is a description of facts which must be admitted with great caution respecting Mohamed, on account of the peculiarity of his case, though admitted both by his friends and enemies. Thus, for example, when it is said that he professed or pretended to be divinely inspired, it is evident, that though this pretension will injure him greatly in the opinion of the philosophers of this day, yet his followers, after his religion once became established, would be very likely to palm

it upon him without any fault of his;—the unprincipled part of them, to support their new-formed government either in church or state, and the mere foolish bigots, because they really fancied it raised his character. At the same time that it raised his character in their eyes, it justified their faith and assisted them in blinding themselves and dispensing with the use of their reason. Bigots never reason. The different sects of Christians and Jews supported the Mohamedan bigots in this, because it enabled them to stigmatize the man they hated for not thinking precisely according to the creed which their infallibility had decided to be right, with the title of Impostor. The philosophers, if any there were in that day, unfortunately neither thought nor wrote on the subject.

Ungenerous Attitude of Jews and Christians

4. As experience teaches us to expect, we find Mohamed branded, both by Jews and Christians, with the worst epithets which vulgar bigotry can invent. He is always denominated an Impostor; but I think I shall be able to shew that this is an

appellation he is not entitled to, at least to the extent to which it is generally carried. It is said that he pretended to be SENT as a PROPHET from God. This, I think, is a pretension he might make, and yet be no impostor. Nothing is so common as for persons to imagine that they are sent or called to preach or teach reformation to their fellow-creatures, either in morals, politics, or religion, and yet to be actuated by no motives of fraud or deceit—without which a man cannot be an impostor. Besides, being sent may mean nothing supernatural. Every man is sent to fulfil the duties of the station in which God has placed him, and I think I shall shew that there is no evidence that Mohamed pretended to any thing more than this.

5. But it will be said, that he pretended to be a Prophet also. I think I shall shew that we have no proof of this; and I beg the reader to remember that the word prophet in the time of Mohamed, and long previously, did not necessarily convey any idea of supernatural power or influence.*

* I should think it did, in the time of Mohammed

When we read in St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, ch. xi. 4, that men prophesying with their heads covered, dishonoured their heads, and that women prophesying with them uncovered, dishonoured them, we must perceive that by the word *prophesying* nothing but preaching is meant. And I think we shall see that, *at least* in the beginning of his mission, Mohamed pretended to nothing more than this—merely that he was sent by God, or inspired, moved in spirit, by God, to preach a reformation in the idolatrous practices of his countrymen.¹ As every man may be said to be moved by God who feels a wish to perform a good act—as our criminal indictments say a man

¹ The learned Dr. Hyde says, “*Testificatio, ea est communis formula quâ quisque se fidei Mohamedanæ addictum profitetur et testificatur, dicendo—Non est Deus nisi ispe Deus, et Mohammed est propheta Dei seu potius Legatus Dei.* Persæ addunt, *Sed Ali est Amicus Dei.*”

“The word Islam means *status salutis*, qui Lat. *Islamismus* vocari possit: et statum talem ingrediens est *Muslim* seu *Musliman*.”—Hyde’s *Tractatus Alberti Boborii*. Oxford, 1690.

is moved by the devil, who wishes to do a bad one—so the view which I take here of the prophetic part of his character is strengthened by the circumstance, that he is not said by his followers ever to have foretold, or pretended to foretell, any event.^a

6. Respecting the word Prophet and

^a The Koranic word generally rendered ‘prophet’ is *nabi*, a man with a *naba*, a message, or *rasul*, one sent on a mission. With Mohammed the words admit of no supernatural interpretation. I quote from the Koran:—

“They said, Has God raised up a man as an apostle?” (S. 17. 94.)

“They said, What an apostle is this? he eats food and walks through the streets! Unless an angel be sent down to him to be a preacher with him, or a treasure be sent down to him, or he have a garden whereof he may eat, (we will not believe).” (S. 25. 7, 8.)

“Not until angels are sent down to us, or we see our Lord, will we believe.” (S. 25. 21.)

“They said, We will by no means believe on thee until thou make a spring (of water) to gush forth for us out of the earth, or there be (made) for thee a garden of palm trees and vines, and thou make rivers to gush forth in its midst, gushing; or thou make the heaven to fall down upon us to punish (us), as thou dost pretend (it will); or thou bring God and the angels before (us), or there be a house of gold for thee; or thou climb up into the heaven; yet will we not believe in thy climbing until thou send down to us a book that we may read.” (S. 17. 90-93.)

the Mohamedan profession of faith, it has been observed, "One element certainly is

Mohammed's reply was as simple as truthful : "My Lord ! was I more than a man (sent as) an apostle ?" (S. 17. 93.)

" Signs are only with God, and I am only a plain warner." (S. 29. 50.)

" I say not to you, With me are the treasures of God, nor that I know the unseen ; nor do I say to you, I am an angel : I follow only that which is revealed to me." (S. 6. 50.)

" I have no power for myself to profit or to harm, except as God pleases. If I knew the unseen, I should surely have much of good, nor would evil touch me; I am no other than a warner and a bearer of glad tidings to people who believe." (S. 7. 188.)

" God sent no apostles before *me* but they ate food and walked through the streets." (S. 25. 20.)

" Had angels walked on earth (as) familiarly, God would surely have sent down to them an angel from heaven as His apostle." (S. 17. 95.)

" But if God had appointed an angel, He should certainly have made him a man too, and then He would have made perplexing for them what they deem perplexing (now)." (S. 6. 9.)

" And even if God were to open above them a gate in the heaven, and all the day long they were climbing into it, they would still say, It is only that our eyes are drunken ; nay, we are a people bound by spell." (S. 15. 14, 15.)

" And if God had sent down to *me* a book on paper, and *ye* had touched it with *your* hands, still those who believe not would say, This is only plain magic." (S. 6. 7.)

" I am only a man like yourselves ; it is but

to know what this profession of faith is. Its first member is, that *there is no God but God.* The second is, that *Mohamed was a sent (resoul) of God:*^a not a *prophet* of God, as sometimes rendered, nor THE sent; for the word is not prophet, and the definite article is excluded by the declaration of Mohamed, that the *resouls* are many and their number unknown. Koran, iv. 163." — *West. Rev.* No. IX. p. 226.

7. This at once does away with all ques-

revealed to me that your God is only one God. Let him then who hopes no meet his Lord do right and let him not join any one in the service of his Lord." (S. 18. 110.)

^a It may not be out of place to notice here the unjust fling of Gibbon at the Mohammedan profession of faith, which he regards as " compounded of an eternal truth and a necessary fiction." (Chap. 1.) So far from being a mere piece of fiction, this latter portion of the profession has served once for all time to fix the place of Mohammed in Islam, thus shutting out effectually all possibilities of its followers investing him with the honours and attributes of God. A yet another profession declares Mohammed as " His servant and His apostle."

^b Mohammed taught that in every age (S. 13. 38.), the same Divine message of wisdom and of truth (S. 2. 151.) has been conveyed to every people (S. 10. 47.), in their own tongues (S. 14. 4.), through an endless succession of prophets and seers. (S. 40. 78.)

tion respecting his being a prophet in the common acceptation of the term.

Of Christian Priests Specially

8. I shall abstain from giving any account of, or copying, the disgusting trash which has been written respecting the character and conduct of Mohamed by the Christian priests—some of them (Prideaux for instance) men of great learning and high respectability—men who, indeed ought to have been above such conduct, but whose zeal in this case has actually destroyed their sense of right and wrong, and, as it should seem, taken away from them the use of their understandings. If I were to detail the vulgar abuse in which they have indulged, no information respecting the character of Mohamed would thereby be conveyed to any *liberal or reflecting mind* and the Christian religion would be wounded by the infamous behaviour of its professors. The folly of this conduct has been felt and admitted by the Rev. Dr. White, in the celebrated Bampton Lectures; and though, as we may expect from a Christian Doctor preaching to the ultra-orthodox

University of Oxford, he was far from unprejudiced, yet he has admitted the truth of many of the assertions of the followers of Mohamed, which a liberal and reflecting mind could not deny, and thereby done himself the greatest honour; and from him, as the very first of Christian authorities, I shall often have occasion to make quotations.

9. It will instantly be seen that his evidence must be considered as that of an unwilling witness. He says,

“In the various writings of the numerous followers of Mahomet, his character is uniformly drawn in the brightest and most amiable colours: he is held up as the unrivalled pattern of every mental and corporeal perfection, and as distinguished by every quality and virtue which can adorn and elevate human nature.” Such is the character which Dr. White informs us he has received from his followers—a character probably overcharged by enthusiasm, but also probably very far from being entirely destitute of foundation in truth, as the following quotation from that

Rev. Doctor's fourth Bampton Lecture will decidedly prove :

10. "The circumstances which attended the earlier years of Mahomet were certainly such as presented no flattering prospects of grandeur, and no probable views of ambition to his future life. Though descended from the most honourable tribe of Arabia, and from the noblest family of that tribe, yet distress and poverty were the only portion which he inherited ; a distress and poverty unsoftened by the tender cares and kind indulgence of parental affection.—The education which he received, like that of the rest of his countrymen, was rough and hardy ; neither tempered by the elegancies of literature, nor even enlightened by the first and most obvious rudiments of knowledge ; but calculated rather to invigorate the powers of the body than to polish and enlarge the mind. The bounty of nature, however, and the exquisite endowments with which she had so liberally adorned the future prophet and monarch of Arabia, abundantly compensated for the unkindness of fortune. Grace-

ful in his person, easy and insinuating in his manners, and endowed with a greatness of mind which could brave the storms of adversity, and rise superior to the disadvantages of an illiterate education, he was in possession of accomplishments more valuable in themselves, and capable of producing more illustrious effects, than all that the influence of wealth, or the authority of hereditary power, could have bestowed."

II. Such is the character given of this great prophet, conqueror, reformer, or impostor, by the Oriental Professor of the University of Oxford. I shall now proceed to give a general outline of his history.

Outline of Mohamed's History

12. In the city of Mecca, or the eastern coast of the Red Sea, in the 57th year of

¹ The exact year has been a subject of dispute, like every thing else respecting Mohamed, but I think this is the most probable. It is of little consequence. ^a

^a The year of Mohammed's birth is allowed on all hands to have been the year in which Abraha, the Ethiopian King of Yemen, led the invasion again Mecca.

Mohammed was born 55 days after the invasion.

the Christian æra, a widow in indigent circumstances, whose husband had been deceased about two months, was delivered of a boy. The uncle of the child, Abu Taleb, a rich man, had compassion on him and sent him five or six miles into the country to nurse. The babe was healthy and beautiful to look upon, and as he advanced in years the sweetness of his disposition rivalled the beauty of his person. Nature had done for him every thing, but fortune withheld her favours. He was poor, and though his uncle did not choose to leave him to perish in his infancy, he did not choose to expend any portion of his wealth to educate him, or to raise him above the very lowest situation in life.

It was towards the end of the fortieth year of the reign of Kesra Anushirwan, and the end of the year 880 of the era of the Seleucidae, on a Monday of the Arabian month Rabi I, as the sun rose; though the exact date is a matter of dispute. (*Qastalani.*) It is stated variously as the 2nd, 8th, 10th, 12th, 17th and 18th of Rabi I. (*Zurqani.*) The 8th of Rabi I is generally accepted by the learned, (*Qastalani.*) though the Nativity of the Prophet is publicly observed on the 12th. (*Zurqani.*) M. Caussin de Perceval calculates it to be the 29th of August, 570 A. C.

When old enough, he began to earn his bread as a camel-driver, in which capacity for many years, he traversed divers countries, by which he acquired a knowledge of men and things, probably much more valuable than the letters which, shut up in a school, a pedant would have taught. This child was Mohamed. As a camel-driver, in the service of his uncle, he continued till he was twenty-five years of age, when he was taken into the employment of a widow of the name of Cadigha, whose husband, a merchant, had died a little time previously, and by whom she had left to her great wealth and complicated mercantile concerns. The business of this lady is stated to have been very extensive, and her husband to have been one of the first merchants of Mecca, his native place. From the age of twenty-five, for about three years, Mohamed managed this concern as a factor, trading for her to Damascus and many other places, when she married him, thereby advancing him from a servant to be all at once one of the principal men of his country, from actual poverty to very

considerable wealth. Amidst all the abuse which religious bigotry has lavished upon Mohamed, it is remarkable that it has not dared to advance any thing against him on account of his conduct to this lady. She lived with him two and twenty years ^a as his sole wife, and it was not till her decease that he indulged himself, after the manner of his country, in a plurality of wives; but shortly after that event he married Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Beker; and Sewda, the daughter of Zama; and some time afterward, Haphsa, the daughter of Omar; thereby rendering himself son-in-law to three of the men who had become his greatest supporters. ^b

13. Dr. White says, "From this period (viz., his marriage with Cadigha) to the time when he announced his mission as the prophet of the Most High, history has recorded nothing concerning the actions and the pursuits of Mahomet. Fifteen years of his life are involved in the deepest and most impenetrable obscurity. One

^a Five and twenty years.

^b Cf. my *Life of Mohammed*, pp. 59-63.

historian only informs us, that God had inspired his prophet with a love of solitude and retirement. But in this single information we see a ray of light sufficient to clear up the darkness of this mysterious interval. In a lonely cave, in the recesses of mount Hara, he shunned the society of men."—WHITE, Ser. IV.^a

14. Again, Dr. White says, "The character of Mahomet, according to eastern historians, had been hitherto preserved unblemished: his moral qualities, no less than his other accomplishments, had contributed to raise him in the esteem of his fellow-citizens; and his integrity in particular had been honoured with the most flattering and distinguished testimony of their approbation. That he might not, however, by too rapid a transition, become a reformer of those very errors in which he himself had been involved; that he might not too suddenly

^a It was, for aught we know of him, a sacred interval in which the man may be said "to have assisted at the birth of his own genius, preparing in silence and maturing by meditation, the mission entrusted to him by the Almighty."—John Davenport, *An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran*, p. 13.

commence a preacher against that idolatry which he had practised in common with the rest of his countrymen; and that he might acquire a reputation for sanctity in some measure correspondent with the high and venerable office which he was about to assume; he affected to pass a great part of his time in religious retirement and holy meditation: he became more grave in his deportment, more profuse in his charities, and more assiduous in his devotions."

15. Notwithstanding the evil intention attributed in the above passage to the new prophet by the reverend lecturer of Oxford, on his own surmise only, without any authority, it is evident that until the fortieth year of his age, when he first undertook the reformation of his countrymen, his conduct had been irreproachable; indeed, such as might well be held up to all as an example. Since the general exemplary life of the prophet could not be denied by the learned Oxonian, but as his merit could not be admitted without danger by a Christian divine, nothing remained but to attribute the conduct of the prophet to

hypocrisy, and the most artful and deeply laid plot or design. Fifteen years, it seems, he passed in a voluntary novitiate, before he made known even to his wife, or his most intimate friends, the object of his penance or seclusion, before he announced to them the glorious mission with which he was charged. Thus, to the virtues allowed him by the Doctor, the merit of great patience at least must be added.

16. I beg the reader here to pause, and consider how different an account may be given of these fifteen years of seclusion by the followers of the prophet, and when all his other conduct during this long time is considered, in all probability, too, given with truth. I can easily give it from the Mohamedan authors, but, according to my rule, it is not admissible as evidence.

His First Converts

17. It is not surprising that his wife Cadigha should be the first of his proselytes, if he were sincere in his professions, but very much the contrary, if he were an impostor. He must have played his part very well for fifteen years together to have

deceived her;¹ for it is admitted, that she was a believer, and not in the pretended plot, or a hypocrite. After Cadigha, his slave Zayd became his second proselyte, who was soon after followed by Ali, the son of Abu Taleb, his uncle.^a Dean Prideaux says, "His fourth disciple was Abu Beker, who, being one of the richest men of Mecca, and a person of great wisdom and experience, brought with him no small help and reputation to his cause; and his example was soon followed by five others, Othman Ebn Affan, Zobair Ebno'l Awam, Saad Ebn Abu Waccas, Abdorrahman Ebn Auf, and Abu Obeida Ebno'l Jerah, who were afterwards the principal generals of his armies, and the chief instruments under him, by whose help

¹ It has been said, that no great man was ever great in the presence of his valet or his wife. Was Mohamed an exception to this rule?

^a "It is strongly corroborative," observes Sir William Muir, "of Mahomet's sincerity that the earliest converts to Islam were his bosom friends and the people of his house-hold; who, intimately acquainted with his private life, could not fail otherwise to have detected those discrepancies which more or less invariably exist between the professions of the hypocritical deceiver abroad and his actions at home."

he established both his empire and his imposture together in those parts of the world."—PRIDEAUX'S *Life of Mahomet*, p. 12, 8vo. ed.

18. Notwithstanding many striking traits of resemblance may be perceived between circumstances in the early histories of Jesus and of Mohamed, yet there are many others in which they as decidedly differ. The twelve first proselytes of Jesus are allowed to have been uneducated men,¹ in the most humble situations of life. On the contrary, it appears that, with the exception of his slave, the first of Mohamed's proselytes were persons of high respectability; and their splendid actions as Caliphs and leaders of the Mohamedan armies, prove them to have possessed first-rate talents, and not to have been men likely to be easily deceived. In the humble characters of the first disciples of Jesus, Mr. Mosheim professes to see

¹ Gr. *Idiotai*, unlearned, men of mean capacities of understandings, they have been called by some of the early Christian writers, whence, probably, by no very great perversion of language, our term idiot has been derived. See the controversy respecting this word betwixt Priestley and Horsley.

much glory to the Christian cause. I am obliged to confess, if I must speak the truth, that, on the contrary, it would have been full as satisfactory to me to have seen among its earliest professors men possessing such characters as those of the Antonines, of Locke, or of Newton. But this only proves how differently the same object appears to different persons.

Beginning of His Mission

19. For several years after the beginning of his mission, (as in future I shall call it,) Mohamed appears not to have made any great progress: but nothing dismayed with the insults, the ridicule, or even with the threats of his opponents, he continued his preaching until the end of the fourth year, when he is stated by the Christians to have made, including those before named, only thirty-nine proselytes: but one of these was Omar Ebno'l Chattab, a man of very high consideration among his opponents, and one whose talents afterward raised him to the Califat and the empire of nearly all Asia. His enemies, the rulers of the state and supporters of the old

system, the *chief priests and pharisees* of his country, finding that neither ridicule (that generally considered invincible weapon against a bad cause) nor the use of such epithets as sorcerer, magician, liar, imposter; &c., had any effect in preventing the increase of his followers; and finding also their loaves and fishes in danger, determined to have recourse to a more effectual measure, and for this purpose they entered into a combination to assassinate him. This conspiracy would probably have finished the prophet, if it had not finished the religion, had it not been discovered and defeated by his uncle, Abu Taleb, one of the chief men of the government, who was not a believer in his mission, but who defended him against his enemies with more success, perhaps with more zeal, than had been shewn by Pilate, his brother idolater, on a similar occasion.

20. It is evident from the unwilling admissions of the Dean of Norwich, that the prophet met the taunts and insults of his countrymen with nothing but mildness and the most insinuating address and man-

ners: to all ranks of persons affable and courteous; and to the poor kind and charitable.¹ In his preaching he is said to have had a ready wit, and I think we cannot doubt his having possessed a considerable share of eloquence. To this line of conduct and to these qualities, I think we may attribute the protection which he received from Abu Taleb, which was so favourable to the prophet, and so honourable to the just and liberal-minded idolater.

21. The facts as here stated are admitted by Prideaux, but to him they are gall and wormwood: he can see in them nothing but baseness and infamy: thus religious bigotry blinds the best of men; for Prideaux was, I believe, a very good man. Well has it been observed by Professor White, that the conduct of Christians in representing Mohamed, the man who raised himself^a from an humble station to the sovereignty of a great empire, as they have often done, to

¹ Prideaux, Life of Mah., p. 19.

^a Not himself but his people; for the Empire came after his death to his people.

be a perfect monster of vice, devoid of both moral and intellectual faculties,¹ and as contemptible on account of his abject stupidity as detestable for his enormous vices, they have not left us, if we were to believe them, any other, or scarcely any other resource, than to admit that his success was the effect of a miracle; and they have rendered it difficult at least, if not impossible, to be accounted for by any human means. But this difficulty need not alarm the pious Christian. It does not exist. The unprincipled falsehood and calumnies of his predecessors, the Rev. Oxonian allows. They are, indeed, totally devoid of all credibility.

The Hegira

22. The conspiracy having failed to take off the prophet, he fearlessly continued to preach, and kept constantly acquiring new proselytes; until, in the eighth year of his preaching, the government passed a law, whereby they forbade any more persons to join themselves to him. But he paid

¹ White, Lecture IV. pp. 164, 166, 8vo. ed.

no attention to this, which availed nothing to his hurt as long as his uncle Abu Taleb lived, but he died two years afterward, and the chief government of the city then remained solely with Abu Sophian, of the house of Cmmia, one of his most bitter opponents. How the prophet managed to support himself against his enemies for the next two years does not clearly appear from the Christian authors, for the idle stories they tell cannot be received as evidence. But I think we may believe Prideaux, that in these two years he retired for some time to a place called Tayif, a town of Hagiuz, about sixty miles from Mecca towards the East, where his uncle Abbas mostly lived. Prideaux says he went there with an intent to make proselytes and seize the town, but that, failing entirely in the first object, he returned to Mecca. It is probable that he retired to avoid the fury of his enemies, and that when it had a little abated, or his party had obtained some advantage, he returned. • Probably when he was at Tayif

• Cf. my *Life of Mohammed*, pp. 63-5.

he would endeavour to make proselytes and probably might fail in his attempt. In the twelfth year of his mission, "some of his followers, to the number of about one hundred persons, (as Prideaux says,) having made themselves more than ordinarily obnoxious to the government, by their practices against it, were forced to fly from Mecca to Nagash, king of Ethiopia, where Mahomet's letters, which they carried with them, obtained their protection, though the men of Mecca sent two of their principal citizens after them in an embassy to that king, to demand them to be delivered unto them. And Mahomet, with the rest that tarried behind, found it very difficult for them to subsist any longer there. For after the departure of so many of his faithfulest adherents into this exile, this farther diminution of his number made him still less able to withstand those insults which his adversaries were continually, on all occasions, making upon him. But what he lost at Mecca, he got at Medina, then called Yatreb, a city lying at the northern end of Hagiuz, two hundred and seventy miles

distant from Mecca, which being inhabited the one part by Jews, and the other part by heretical Christians, and these two parties not well agreeing in the same city, the factions and feuds that arose between them drove one of the parties to Mahomet, and in the thirteenth year of his pretended mission, there came to him from thence seventy-three men and two women, who embraced his imposture, and swore fealty to him, whereon he chose twelve out of them whom he retained awhile with him at Mecca, to instruct them in his new religion, and then sent them back again to Yatreb, to be as his twelve apostles, there to propagate it in that town, in which they laboured with that success, that in a short time they drew over a great party of the inhabitants to embrace the imposture: of which Mahomet receiving an account, resolved to retire thither, as finding Mecca now grown too hot for him. For the chief men of the city finding that Mahomet's indefatigable industry and cunning still kept up his party, do what they could to suppress it, resolved, without further delay, to strike at the root

and prevent the farther spreading of the mischief by cutting off him that was the chief author of it. Of which he having received full and early intelligence, and finding no other way to avoid the blow but to fly from it, ordered all his party, whom he could prevail with, to accompany him in his banishment, secretly in the evening to withdraw out of the city, and retire to Yatreb. And when he had seen them all gone, he and Abu Beker followed after, leaving only Ali behind, who having set in order some affairs that detained him, came to them on the third day after. As soon as this flight was publicly known, parties were sent out to pursue after him, and he difficultly escaped them, by hiding himself for some time in a cave till the heat of the pursuit was over."—PRID. *Life of Mah.*, p. 55.

23. In this account of the Rev. Dean we see the general gloss and canting style which are usually adopted on such occasions by the priests and rulers, with whom he here identifies himself, against all such persons as preach up reformation of the abuses, by means of which, together with

the labour of their fellow-creatures, they live in ease and luxury. The Dean seems to know perfectly well, and to entertain no doubts whatever respecting, the private sentiments of the governors of Mecca, and of Mohamed, and of his followers: nor does he seem the least shocked with their attempts to murder this hitherto peaceable preacher. However, we may receive for true, that a number of his followers fled to Nagush, King of Ethiopia, and that some time afterward, a deputation having come to him from Yatreb or Medina, he fled thither himself with all or the most of his followers. All this is perfectly natural, consistent with probability and our experience of the affairs of mankind. It is what happened in similar circumstances to Socrates, to Pythagoras, to Moses, to Luther, and to many others, and even to Jesus Christ¹ himself. In order to disguise the fact, which cannot be denied, that a number of persons of Medina had become proselytes to his religion, the Dean des-

¹ Matt. xii. 15; Mark iii. 7, &c.

cribes this effect to have happened in consequence oqels betwixt fuarr the Jews and Christians, which compelled one party to throw themselves into his arms. It does not appear that any disorder or bloodshed took place on his arrival at Medina. His party was so superior to either that of the Jews or of the Christians, that he met with no resistance, and immediately proceeded to take possession of the government.

24. The account of the flight from Mecca to *Medina*, at that time, from its superior state of learning called the City of the Book, may be read in Gibbon's History, in chapter fifty of the uncorrupted version.

25. This flight of Mohamed must not be passed lightly over. It proved in its effects of incalculable importance to the future fortunes of a great part of mankind. From the day of this flight, the sixteenth of July, six hundred and twenty-two of the Christian æra, the æra of the Hegira takes its date. From this date all the numerous tribes of the followers of Mohamed, wher-ever scattered, uniformly reckon their time.

This is a curious and important fact, but it bears no comparison in point of importance to some other consequences which followed, and were the effects of this cause. It is very certain that until this flight the prophet had confined himself, whether from principle or prudence I do not say and it is of no consequence in the argument, to the use of peaceable means only ; to the power of eloquence and persuasion, for the propagation of his doctrine. By this persecution, he was driven to take up the sword in his own defence, and from a preacher he was converted into a soldier, a hero, and a conqueror. From this æra must be dated not the Hegira only, but the beginning of great revolutions, causing the death of millions of human beings, the overthrow of great numbers of mighty states and kingdoms, and the foundation of some of the most magnificent empires which the globe has ever seen. In short, from this apparently trifling event, the face of the whole world has been changed.

26. Notwithstanding all the glosses and misrepresentations of Prideaux and other

Christian authors, it is very evident that until the Hegira, the life and moral conduct of Mohamed had been correct in a high degree. Except the wicked object or intention from which his actions either good in themselves or indifferent, are *said* to have originated, not a single charge can be brought against him. After the Hegira I speak not so decisively on this point. Had the foolish bigots of Mecca been persuaded to abolish their idolatry, or been content, like the prophet, to make use only of the weapons of reason and argument, in what a different situation might the world have been placed at this time! What a stupendous effect has arisen from the folly of these few miserable priests of a contemptible religion! What miseries have been brought on the world by this pernicious order of men! In all ages and in all nations, the priests have been the enemies of the happiness of mankind. To them may almost all the great revolutions of the world be traced. *As a society, they are, as far as in their power,* what they always have been. And what

they always have been, they always will continue: from the nature and constitution of the order they can be no other. By acquiring an influence over the minds and consciences of kings, they have succeeded in preventing them from listening to the complaints of their subjects, and consenting to timely reforms, in consequence of which most of the revolutions of the world have taken place, all which may fairly be charged to their account. It is not to the philosophers and the Carbonari, that the late revolutions of France and Spain are to be attributed, but to the murderers of the family of the Calases, and to the heads of the Inquisition. Nor are Ferdinand and Miguel the persons to whose charge the miseries of Spain and Portugal ought to be laid. They are but the creatures of the priests; they are only what the priests, who have the sole merit or demerit of every action of their lives, have made them. An established priesthood has all the dangerous qualities of a corresponding society. All hierarchies have been raised to the height which they acquire at first by

good conduct in the priests. They rise by the prudent behaviour of good men in humble life to wealth and power; these once obtained, bad men get possession of the power, and the order then becomes the curse of the world.

Mohamed at Medina.

27. Dr. Prideaux informs us, that the adherents of Mohamed at Medina were chiefly among the Christians, and that he was received by them with great acclamations; all this, for the reason he gives, seems very probable. After his arrival, as soon as it could conveniently be done, he built himself a house, which he made his usual residence to the time of his death. He also built adjoining to it a mosque, for the celebration of the rites of religion. Of what these consisted I have no information. If we could discover them, no doubt they would be very curious. The circumstance proves that the persons possessing the government of Medina, whether Jews or Christians, and they are said by Prideaux to have consisted of one of these two sects, were favourers of his doctrines. This was

the first city which, as a city, adopted his religion. A question naturally arises, as to what this religion could consist of, which could have such an influence? No weapon had yet been used but reason and eloquence; so that the Christian priests cannot attribute this conversion to the fear of the sword. It must be recollectcd, too, that, if we are to believe Prideaux, this was not a city of idolaters, as Mecca was, but of Jews and Christians, who were his first proselytes. It also seems that he did not go to Medina to make proselytes; the Medinese came to seek him.

State of War Declared

28. War having now actually commenced betwixt Mohamed and the people of Medina on one side, and the governors of Mecca on the other, the prophet, as might be expected, (but for the first time,) gave orders to his followers to prepare themselves with arms, and after having *mustered* them and *enrolled* them, to use Prideaux's words, for the war, he gave the command of them to his uncle Hamza, constituting him thereby his standard-

bearer. After some time, understanding that the caravan of the people of Mecca was on the road, he sent out (as Prideaux says) Hamza to attack it with thirty men. What a prodigious enrolment and muster there must have been! But finding it guarded by three hundred soldiers, he made no attempt upon it.* The next year, the second of the Hegira, on the approach of the Mecca caravan, guarded by one thousand men, under the command of Abu Sophian, Mohamed himself marched out at the head of three hundred and nineteen men, and, notwithstanding the superiority of the caravan's guard, after a desperate battle defeated it, and obtained a complete victory. Although a considerable part of

* All this in the vein of European writers. But as a matter of fact, no state of war was yet declared. On his arrival at Medinah, Mohammed stood in hourly dread of attack from Mecca, and had taken precaution to appoint reconnoitring parties around the city which had given him an asylum. Hamzah was placed in charge of one such party. In the annals of Islam this is known as Sariya Saiful Bahr. Hamzah came upon the Koreish caravan, and only narrowly escaped being attacked through the good services of Majdi b. Amru al-Juhani. See my *Wars of Mohammed*, in loco.

the caravan was saved by the good conduct of Abu Sophian, and escaped back to Mecca, yet Mohamed took a very large booty.

29. Of course, a victory like this over so decided a superiority in numbers, must have given great spirits to his adherents.^b

30. In the year following, the third of the Hegira, we find him making war upon certain Jews or Jewish tribes of Arabs, commanded by a man named Caab. This is said to have arisen from some satirical verses which Caab wrote upon Mohamed. It is difficult to discover what truth there may be in this, but it ended in favour of the prophet, Caab not only making peace with him, but becoming a proselyte and one

^a This is the wrong account of the Battle of Badr as usually given by European writers. It is preposterous to believe that Mohammed would venture out of his hospitable refuge with only 319 men and attack a caravan guarded by 1000 soldiers. The battle was fought in self-defence at Badr, where the Meccan army was encountered by Mohammed. See my *Life of Mohammed*, pp. 91-9. Also M. Cheragh Ali's *Critical Exposition of the Popular 'Jihad'*, pp. viii-xi, 11, 12, 33.

^b Never, unless the victory were also moral; not an immoral victory such as is here mentioned.

of his greatest confidants.^a Towards the end of this year, he fought a battle with Abu Sophian and the people of Mecca, in which he suffered a defeat, and was wounded. His standard-bearer Hamza was killed. It is said, that if Abu Beker had not come to his assistance, he must have been destroyed.^b But the battle does not appear to have been attended with any very important consequences, as we find his general, Omar, in the next year, the fourth of the Hegira, carrying on a successful war against the Nadorites, a tribe of the Jewish religion, the whole of which he is said to have put to the sword.^c The fifth year of the Hegira is remarkable for the war of the ditch, as it is called. Abu Sophian and the people of Mecca having allied themselves to several other tribes, marched against Medina with ten thousand men. This caused the prophet to take the field : but on his meeting them, he found himself much inferior in

^a The facts are here strangely confused. See my *Life*, pp. 101-4.

^b *Ibid.*, pp. 105-10.

^c It is not a fact that the Jewish tribe of Nadir (Nadorites) was exterminated. See my *Life*, pp. 112-4.

strength, and therefore encamped, and fortified himself by drawing a ditch in front of his encampment. His enemies besieged him many days without success, and at length were obliged to retreat, their army breaking into dissensions and returning home, in consequence, it is said, of some of them being corrupted by their countrymen in the army of Mohamed. Thus the war this year ended in his favour. In the sixth year, Mohamed having subdued several other Arab tribes, and finding himself very much strengthened, changed the plan of the war, became the aggressor, and marched against the city of Mecca. The armies met near that city, and a battle ensued, in which neither party gaining any decisive advantage, a truce was concluded for ten years.^a By this truce Mohamed seems to have gained very great advantage, his partisans having permission to go into and return from Mecca whenever they thought proper, only coming unarmed and keeping the peace.^b In this year he is said

^a It is not history. See *Life*, pp. 130-34. ^b See above.

to have been inaugurated by the chief men of his army under a tree near Mecca, to have been declared a king, and to have taken the insignia of royalty, at the same time declaring himself also high-priest of his religion.^a This may very probably have been the truth, as we find all his successors in the Caliphat following this practice, and uniting in their own persons both the characters of head of the religion, and of the monarchy, precisely as the kings of England do at this day. In this year, the seventh of the Hegira, we are told that he had poison given to him by an inhabitant of a town of Jewish Arabs, called Chaibar, which he had conquered. From the effects of this poison he never entirely recovered.^b

His Last Years

31. In the eighth year of the Hegira,

^a I am unable to make out this piece of history; there never was a ceremony like the one mentioned here. But see an account of Mohammed after the fall of Mecca, in my *Life*, pp. 155-68.

^b A Jewish woman, by name Zeinab, whose uncle was killed in one of the wars, had spread a poisoned repast for Mohammed and some of his followers. One of these died immediately, but the life of Mohammed

having greatly increased in power, Mohamed alleging in his justification, how truly I know not, that the governors of Mecca had broken the truce, marched against them, and in a very short space of time obliged the city to surrender at discretion ; ^a Abu Sophian, the greatest of his enemies, *having first come over to him* along with his uncle Al Abbas. Immediately on obtaining possession of the city, he proceeded to abolish the idol worship, and to substitute the worship of one only God, which has remained to this day. Soon after the conquest of Mecca, several of the neighbouring tribes of Arabs, fearing his increasing power, combined together to attack and reduce him before he should become too powerful for them. At first they obtained several advantages, but he finally succeeded in completely defeating them, and soon after this all the remainder of the different tribes of Arabia submitted to him ; ^b and thus, in the eleventh year of the

was saved, although later he suffered severely from its effects. Mohammed, however, forgave the woman, and restored her unharmed to her family.

^a See *Life*, pp. 155-60. ^b See *Life*, chap. ix.

Hegira, he became the sole monarch of the extensive, and, now being united, powerful empire of Arabia, or, as it has been called, of the Saracens. He did not live long to enjoy this high station, but in the twelfth year of the Hegira he gradually declined, and died about sixty-one years of age.^a

32. He is said to have been aware of his approaching death, and the cool and philosophical manner in which, when he found his end approaching, he prepared for it and arranged his affairs, leave no room to doubt that his mind in that trying moment was undisturbed by the horrors of remorse. In a word, he may justly be said to have lived like a hero, and to have died like a philosopher.^b

33. The account which I give here of the last hours of the prophet will be denied. It has been too often the practice of Christian devotees to publish accounts of the death-bed scenes of their opponents, when even, if true, in consequence of the failure of the faculties of the mind, no inference

^a Mohammed died at the age of 63.

^b See *Lifr*, chap. x.

of the least importance could be deduced from them. But as long as Mohamed had the undoubted command of his understanding, his conduct was that of a hero and a philosopher. After his fever brought on delirium I know nothing about him.

34. Having finished this slight sketch of the life of Mohamed, in which I have merely noticed such facts as are admitted, and cannot be denied by either his friends or enemies, which is all that on principles of sound criticism can be admitted, I shall proceed to make a few observations upon the doctrines which he taught—a part of my work beyond all comparison the most important, and from the discussion of which I have hitherto most carefully abstained.

Sources of Information regarding Mohamed

35. In the consideration of this part of the subject it is extremely difficult to ascertain what authorities ought to be received, and what rejected. The very peculiar circumstances in which Mohamed was placed, as I have said before, renders even the evidence of his supporters not

always admissible as to facts which we consider unfavourable to him; for they often considered things favourable, which we consider the contrary. Thus, for example, some of his followers, long after his death, believing that he performed miracles, declared that he professed to have that power: a thing he certainly never pretended to.

36. The grand piece of evidence, upon which most authors have relied, has been the Koran: every word, and even letter of which is now held by the Mohamedans to have been written by divine inspiration, and therefore free from error; as many Christians at this day consider the gospels. But notwithstanding these very high pretensions, this work is attended with very many and very great difficulties.

37. This book is said to have been revealed to Mohamed, chapter after chapter, by the angel Gabriel,^a and to have

^a In the Koran the process of all revelation is held to be strictly subjective. (*Cf.* the story of Abraham in S. 6. 74-83.) In meeting the reflec-

been announced as such by him, as they were required by circumstances, from day to day, during a space of more than twenty years.^a Now is this true? Was it thus announced by him, or was it not? If we consider the matter coolly, it seems very unlikely that any one should have believed this when he announced it to

tions of his contemporaries, Mohammed said: "Just consider each verse as it occurs; your companion (Mohammed) errs not, nor is he led astray, nor speaks he out of lust: it is no other than a revelation revealed. One Mighty in power taught it him, endowed with wisdom: for he had attained perfection, and was (now) in the highest horizon; then he rose higher and higher, till he was at the distance of two cubits, or nigher yet. Then He revealed to His servant (Mohammed) what He revealed." (S. 53. 1-10.)

Elsewhere this plain speech is garbed in metaphor, drawn from the older systems, which regarded the angels as a medium of revelation: "Gabriel has revealed it *upon thy* (Mohammed's) *heart*, by the pleasure of God." (S. 2. 97.) The words I have italicized pointing at the same time to a purely spiritual, subjective process. The reader will not have failed to observe the identity of 'Gabriel' of S. 2. 97 and 'One Mighty in power,' of S. 53. 5.

Thus, while the spirit which moved Mohammed was of God, the whole Koran is said to be "the speech of an honourable apostle (Mohammed)." (S. 81. 19; S. 69. 41.)

^a Twenty-three years.

them; and to obviate this difficulty, his Christian historians have affirmed that these revelations were often disbelieved and treated with contempt—though they are unwillingly obliged to allow that in the end they were believed. But a new question arises—Do we now possess the real papers which he published, if he did publish any? We are told that when he received any of these revelations he dictated them to a secretary, who wrote them down, not knowing how either to read or write himself: that then they were read to his followers until they could repeat them; after which they were safely locked up in a chest, under the care of one of his wives, in whose keeping they were at the time of his death. Concerning these papers Dean Prideaux says, “That soon after the decease of Mahomet, Abu Beker thought it necessary to publish these papers, and for this purpose had recourse to the chest, and partly out of the papers he found there, and *partly out of the memory* of those who had learnt them by heart, he composed

the book; for, several of these papers being lost, and several so *defaced* that they could not be read, he was forced to take in the assistance of those who pretended to remember what the impostor had taught them, to make up the matter, and under this pretence made use of their advice to frame the book, as he thought would best answer his purpose." Here we have a very curious, but a probable, account of this immaculate record, by which the actions and opinions of Mohamed are to be tried. I take the liberty of asking any lawyer if he would, in the trial of Mohamed, permit his case to go to a jury upon this evidence? I think he would not. But this is not all; this is only the first amended version. After the prophet had been dead upwards of twenty years, Othman, finding that this version was full of *errors, corruptions*, and *mistakes*, (that is, in other words, that it did not serve his purpose,) caused all the copies to be called in and burnt, and published a new one. which we now have, and which, in his opinion, was

right and correct. If a lawyer would not receive the first version, what will he do with the second? The fact here stated can hardly be doubted, because they seem to be taken by Prideaux from the works of both Christians and Mohamedans. Knowing, as we do, the ignorance and bigotry of some of Mohamed's followers, and the knavery also of others, combined with the ignorance and bigotry of the former, we surely can admit no part of this book to be evidence against him, except with the most extreme caution.

38. The difficulty, with respect to these revelations of the box, is increased by the consideration of a fact which seems to be admitted by both sides, both Mohamedans and Christians—namely, that he could neither read nor write;* and various

*It is absurd to say that Mohammed "could neither read nor write." It is based on a miscomprehension of the word 'ummîy,' used in the Koran in relation to Mohammed. As the learned compiler of the "Arabic-English Lexicon" says, the word is a rel. n. from 'ummatun,' and properly means *Gentile*: whence, in a secondary, or tropical, sense, a *heathen*; one *not having a revealed scripture*;

stories are told, and persons pointed out as the writers of them—persons whom

(Bd in S. 3. 19 and 69;) so applied by those having a revealed scripture; (Bd in S. 3. 69:) [and particularly] an *Arab*: (Jel in S. 3. 69, and Bd and Jel in S. 62.2:) [or] in the proper language [of the Arabs], *of*, or *belonging to*, or *relating to*, the nation (*ummatur*) of the *Arabs*, who did not write nor read: and therefore metaphorically applied to any one *not knowing the art of writing nor that of reading*: (Mgh:) or one who does not write; (T, M, K). . . . Mohammad was termed ‘*ummiy*’ [meaning *A Gentile*, as distinguished from an Israelite: or, accord. to most of his followers, meaning *illiterate*.] because the nation (*ummah*) of the *Arabs* did not write, nor read writing. . . . (Lane, vol. i, p. 92.)

Mark the ridiculous lengths to which inferences have been drawn to give the word a meaning not otherwise warranted by principles of lexicography! As a matter of fact, *a'n-nabiyyi'l-ummiy* (S. 7. 157), in the Koran, means the *National Prophet* of Arabia. Certain traditions also show that *ummiy* is derived from *Ummu'l-qura* (the mother-city, or metropolis), an epithet of Mecca; the meaning, in this case, being the Meccan Prophet.

To my mind, the whole difficulty arises from the doctrine of *objective* revelation, which the Mohammedans have borrowed from the older systems, in defiance of the plain teachings of Mohammed on the subject (see pp. 46, 47, *ante*)—doing away with the intellectual and moral *growth* of the men esteemed by them as prophets and seers. All the wise and foolish friends of Mohammed have therefore striven hard to

he procured secretly to write them for him—at one time a Jew, at another time

maintain the unlettered character of their prophet; thus enhancing (to their minds) the Divine character of the revelations vouchsafed to him, the true nature of which they were unable to comprehend or to appreciate,

I will have occasion to quote Mohammed's own words to show how highly he valued reading and writing and was never tired of insisting upon his followers to "seek knowledge, even if it be in China." I should here only give the story of the prisoners of war that fell into the hands of Mohammed after the Battle of Badr. They were redeemed according to their several means, some paying a thousand, and others as much as four thousand pieces of silver. Such as had nothing to give were liberated without payment, but to each of such as were liberated Mohammed set the task of teaching ten Muslims the art of writing, and the teaching was accepted as a ransom. In fact, the urgency of his situation, his services for a long time as the chief mercantile agent of the richest merchant-woman (Khadijah) of Mecca in the distant province of Syria, his intense interest in, and appreciation of, reading and writing, his care in educating his daughters and wives and his followers in the art, his special instructions on record to his amanuenses in regard to the development of calligraphy, his sending letters to foreign rulers and keeping up correspondence with the Jews in Hebrew, not to mention the literary miracle of the Koran which conquered an opposing world within the life-time of a man—all go greatly against the theory of an illiterate prophet.

a Persian. It is allowed that this work is written in an uniform style, and is in

The very first call of Mohammed comprised a reference to Pen as the most wonderful favour bestowed upon man by a Beneficent God:

Cry ! for the Lord is the most Beneficent, who taught (man) the (use of) Pen, (thereby) teaching him what (otherwise) he could not know. (Koran, S. 96. 3-5.)

When confronted with the ridicule of his opponents, Mohammed only turned to the masters of the ink-pot, and of the pen, and of literature, for consolation and edification :

(I refer to) the ink-pot, and the pen, and their writing ! thou (Mohammed) art not, by the grace of thy Lord, a madman ; and thou shall certainly have a meed which will be no mere favour, for thou art truly of a grand character. Then wilt thou see, and they shall see which of you shall be in trouble. (S. 68. 1-6.)

Among some of Mohammed's beautiful references to the art of writing, at a time when it was at a discount among the Arabs, whose tenacious memory was their pride, are the following :

Alif : Lâm : Râ (rudiments of the Arabic alphabet) : a writing the signs of which are fixed in wisdom and then detailed from before a Wise, Informed (God). (S. 11. 1.)

Hâ : Mîm : a revelation from the Merciful, the Compassionate : a writing the signs of which are detailed in a plain reading, for a people who have knowledge. (S. 41. 1, 2; cf. S. 40. 1, 2.)

Tâ : Sîn : these are the signs of reading and a distinct writing. (S. 27. 1; cf. S. 12. 1; S. 26. 1.)

the most elegant dialect of the Arabian language. This does not look like the work of several persons. Although the caliphs, after a little time, became men of high refinement and civilization, yet those who were contemporary with the prophet, are said to have been excessively ignorant and illiterate, though they were evidently men of superior talent. The people of Mecca, the native city of the prophet, are said to have been proverbially ignorant. It seems almost incredible that the people possessing within their walls a temple, which was frequented by all the various tribes of Arabia to offer sacrifice, (as the Delphi of the Greeks,) the priests of which had power to make them all lay down their arms, and keep the peace for two months in

Alif : Lám : Mín : these are the signs of an intelligent writing. (S. 31. 1 ; cf. S. 10. 1)

Alif : Lám : Mín : that is without doubt the writing—a guidance for those who fear to do wrong. (S. 2. 1, 2.)

This Mohammed is accused by his followers of illiteracy, because he was a prophet of the Most

every year, should be so illiterate. In whichever way we look at the Koran, it is attended with great difficulties. However, of this I am certain, that although much of the work *may be* from the pen, or of the dictation, of Mohamed the prophet, yet he cannot be made responsible for a single sentence which it contains to his disadvantage.

39. That the Koran has been acted on in some way or other, if it be not a forgery altogether, is pretty evident from the fact that it is often in itself called by the name of Koran, a word which means *a collection*, alluding to the chapters or loose scraps of which it was composed.^{1 a}

¹ Vide Erpen. Nol. ad Hist. Joseph. p. 3; also Maracci de Alcor. p. 41; Sale, pref. p. 74.

^a On this subject I should refer the reader to the very learned discourse of Sir William Muir, in his *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 549-63. He concludes: "But bating this serious defect [‘the want of arrangement and connection which pervades it’], we may upon the strongest presumption affirm that every verse in the Corân is the genuine and unaltered composition of Mahomet himself, and conclude with at least a close approximation to the verdict of Von Hammer: *That*

40. Suppose, for the sake of argument, at present we exclude the Koran altogether, what evidence then shall we have respecting him? Truly nothing, but the Christian bigots on one side, and the Mohamedan bigots on the other; and I see no other way than balancing the accounts of one against the other, comparing them both with what general experience of human nature teaches is probable, and thus deducing a conclusion as well as we are able. It is very obvious that the writers we have on either one side or the other, were persons very unlikely

we hold the Coran to be as surely Mahomet's word, as the Mahometans hold it to be the word of God."

"The importance of this deduction," continues the writer we are quoting, "can hardly be over-estimated. The Coran becomes the ground-work and the test of all enquiries into the origin of Islam and the character of its founder. Here we have a store-house of *Mahomet's own words recorded during his life*, extending over the whole course of his public career, and illustrating his religious views, his public acts, and his domestic character. By this standard of his own making we may safely judge his life and actions, for it must represent either what he actually thought, or that which he affected to think. And so true a mirror is the Coran of Mahomet's character, that the saying

to sift and weigh the evidence; every idle story, which gaping credulity propagated, would most likely be greedily swallowed. Much of what our writers give us is taken from a work written by a man called Johannes Andreas, who was an Alfacki, or a doctor of the Mohamedan law, who in or about the year 1487, at Toledo, in Spain, turned Christian. I confess I take the evidence of a man of this description with very great jealousy and suspicion; besides, his work betrays the most violent hatred in every page. He seems to have been to the Mohamedans precisely what

became proverbial among the early Moslems, *His character is the Coran.* ‘Tell me,’ was the curious enquiry often put to Ayesha, as well as to Mahomet’s other widows, ‘tell me something about the Prophet’s disposition.’ ‘Thou hast the Corân,’ replied Ayesha; ‘art thou not an Arab, and readest the Arabic tongue?’ ‘Yes, verily.’ ‘Then why takest thou the trouble to enquire of me? For the Prophet’s disposition is no other than the Corân itself.’ Of Mahomet’s biography the Corân is the keystone.”

As to the word ‘Koran,’ in Arabic ‘Qur’ân,’ it is derived from *qara'a*, meaning *to cry, to proclaim.* It is an onomatopoetic word, the same as used in Isaiah 40. 6, and in the first call of Mohammed in S. 96. 1. Mohammed’s message is called al-Koran, *the Proclamation.*

St. Augustine was to the Manicheans, and would probably as little hesitate at a lie to blacken his old companions as the latter, whose profligate lies are as notorious as his hypocrisy was disgusting, and yet he is held up by Lardner as the "GLORY OF AFRICA."¹

41. It will, perhaps, not be thought surprising that, under such circumstances, I should suspect such a man as Andreas, after it is known that Grotius could condescend to a pious lie to blacken the impostor in the eyes of Christians, as the following note from Mr. Gibbon proves: "The Christians, rashly enough, have assigned to Mahomet a tame pigeon, that seemed to descend from heaven and whisper in his ear. As this pretended miracle is urged by Grotius, (*de Veritate Religionis Christianæ*), his Arabian translator, the learned Pococke, inquired of

¹ This precious renegade says that he travelled into Ethiopia to preach the gospel, and that he saw there some men without heads, but with two eyes in the breast, and others with only one eye in the forehead. This great crony of Lardner's, the glory of Africa, is a pretty sample of a missionary priest.

him the names of his authors; and Grotius confessed that it is unknown to the Mahometans themselves. Lest it should provoke their indignation and laughter, the pious *lie* is suppressed in the Arabic version; but it has maintained an edifying place in the numerous editions of the Latin text."¹ If Grotius could stoop to such baseness, well may we be suspicious of a man in the situation of Andreas.

42. In estimating the character of Mohamed, we have no more right to assume that he was a most consummate rogue, hypocrite, liar, and villain, totally destitute of all principle, than we have to assume that he was a Socrates. And when I hear him accused of being the former, I immediately have recourse to the general character and conduct which both parties agree he maintained in the early and middle part of his life. I find this to have been irreproachable. Then am I to believe at once that this was mere

¹Pococke, Specimen Hist. Arabum. pp. 186, 187; Reland de Religione Moham. lib. ii., c. xxxix. pp. 259-262; Gibbon, ch. l. p. 249, 4to ed.

hypocrisy? Fourteen or fifteen years together, I am told to believe, that he carried this farce on—from twenty-five years old to forty. That until he was twenty-five years of age his life was that of meritorious industry: his integrity unsuspected. That at that time great affluence became his lot as the reward of his honesty and industry; and that this good fortune at once converted this honourable and upright man into a most determined villain. And what was the object which he proposed to himself by this extraordinary conduct? The indulgence of two passions, we are told, was his object: the enjoyment of women, and the gratification of the most stupendous ambition, the ambition of a merchant (not a soldier) of a trading city, to make himself the emperor of the world; and that as a preparative he served a novitiate of fourteen years of seclusion and irreproachable conduct, which irreproachable conduct we must recollect in his case, on account of its hypocrisy, was abandoned profligacy. Have we in the history of the world any thing

similar to this? The gratification of the second object of his desires, the enjoyment of women, is attended with a very singular circumstance. He married Cadigha, who was fifteen years older than himself, when he was only twenty-five years of age, the very time of life when youthful passion may be supposed to be at its height; and though, by the laws of his country, he was entitled to have a plurality of wives,^a he neglected to avail himself of this permission, and continued faithful to her as long as she lived—twenty-two years,^b having by her a large family.^c The friends of this *profligate impostor*, I fear, will be so blind as to see nothing in this but gratitude to his kindest friend, the maker of his fortune, unless they should believe that a young man, possessing every personal accomplishment, could have an affection for a woman of forty. His enemies, no doubt,

^a Was there a law which restricted or interdicted this before Islam?

^b Twenty-five years.

^c Of four daughters, Zeinab, Rukayyah, Ummi Kulthum, and Fatimah.

would say that he was devoid of passion, notwithstanding his numerous family, if it were not well known that almost immediately after his wife's death he married three or four very beautiful young women.^a This, his enemies say, was done to strengthen his party. It seems rather singular that he did not think of this before the twelfth year of his mission, when Cadigha was dead.^b

43. If ambition were merely the object of Mohamed, why did he not by intrigue endeavour to get himself appointed to be the keeper of the famous Caaba, the temple of Mecca, formerly held by his ancestors, which conveyed to the person

^a"It should be remembered, however, that most of Mohammed's marriages may be explained, at least, as much by his pity for the forlorn condition of the persons concerned, as by other motives. They were almost all of them with widows who were not remarkable either for their beauty or their wealth, but quite the reverse. May not this fact, and his undoubted faithfulness to Khadijah till her dying day, and till he himself was past fifty-two give us additional ground to hope that calumny or misconception has been at work?"—Rev. Bosworth-Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*.

Cf. my *Life of Mohammed*, pp. 59-63.

holding it the first rank and station in the state, and, indeed, in all Arabia? This was a very celebrated temple, something like that at Delphi, and considered particularly holy. To it flocked great numbers of pilgrims from all Arabia. As I have before observed, for two months in the year that the pilgrimage might be made, all the different tribes ceased from every kind of warfare; so that, however base and degrading its idolatrous rites might be, and Mr. Sale has shewn that they were very bad, they were at least attended with one substantial good. Some authors tell us that this temple was built by Ishmael, who resided at Mecca, and that the statue of Abraham was the most distinguished. It contained also those of Noah, Moses, &c., so that the Jewish religion was at the bottom of it. And it is also said that the absolute unity of God, the first part of Mohamed's creed, God is God, was common to all the Arabians before his time, notwithstanding their adoration of idols.

44. But if ambition were the only

motive of Mohamed, it seems to me that a much finer opening offered itself to him in declaring himself the Jewish Messiah, than in the line that he pursued, of professing himself a Christian or follower of Jesus. I can entertain no doubt that if he and his successors had adopted this line of conduct, and had made Jerusalem the place of their abode, that they would have drawn the whole of the unfortunate Jews into their fold, and as many at least of the flock of Jesus as they obtained by the plan which they adopted; as it appears to me, the banks of the Jordan are on many accounts well situated for the residence and seat of government of the monarch possessing Egypt and Western Asia. With one hand he would have reached the Nile, with the other the Euphrates.*

45. In our endeavours to find out the true character of Mohamed, it is, in my opinion, of the first-rate consequence to inquire what was the general tendency of

*See my *Life*, chap.

the doctrines which *all parties* agree that he taught. His morality is allowed to be excellent. There is no moral precept in the Christian religion which is not found to be inculcated by the Mohamedan, and, in some instances, finely ornamented and embellished by the poetic genius of Arabia. A pretty story is told by Gibbon. A slave of Hassan, the son of Ali, dropt, by accident, a dish of scalding broth on his master; the heedless wretch fell prostrate to deprecate his punishment, and repeated a verse of the Koran: *Paradise is for those who command their anger.* I am not angry, said Hassan. *And for those who pardon offences.* I pardon your offence. *And for those who return good for evil.* I give you your liberty and four hundred pieces of silver.¹ Whether the story be true or not is of little consequence; the doctrine of commanding the temper and returning good for evil is finely taught.

46. When the numerous, lengthened and almost unintelligible creeds of the

¹ Sale's Koran. ch. iii. note, p. 75.

Christian religion are contemplated, a philosopher may perhaps be tempted to heave a sigh of regret for the beautiful, plain, intelligible and unadorned simplicity of the Mohamedan profession of faith: *I believe in one God, and Mohamed the apostle or messenger of God.* In other form: *God is God, and Mohamed is his prophet;* or, *I believe in God and in the doctrines respecting him taught by the preacher Mohamed.*^a

^a The Mohammedan profession of faith, translated literally, runs thus: *I bear witness that there is no God [ilâh, a god] but God [Allâh, from al, the; and ilâh, a god], and I bear witness that Mohammed is the apostle of God.* The creed of Mohammed is therefore no mere passive profession of faith; it is as severely uncompromising in tone as its spirit is dynamic; firmly refusing any complicity with the popular creed of priest-craft and self-interest, accepting Mohammed as a guide only in so far as he speaks from God.

Mohammed looked upon the servile deference of religionists to their priests as sheer polytheism. Speaking of some Christians, he said, "They take their priests and their monks for lords rather than God, and the Messiah son of Mary; although they are only bidden to serve one God; there is no God but He." (Koran, S. 9.31.) Of the sensual man, he said, "He takes his lust for his God, and him God suffers to go astray knowingly, and upon his hearing and heart He has set a seal, and over his

But however much this species of simple brevity may be to the taste of modern philosophy, or of Arabian fraudulent imposture, Divine Wisdom, if we are to believe our priests, has ordained a more complicated system for the religion of Jesus. To deny the wisdom of this dispensation would evidently be profane, though the reality of it may be doubted, and the discussion of it does not appertain to my subject.

47. Among the most important of religious duties enjoined by Mohamed are prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. Five times a day every devout Musselman must turn himself to the holy city of Mecca and utter a prayer;^a "and in the

sight He has placed a covering." (S. 45. 23.) The only pledge Mohammed would demand of those who followed him was moral, appealing to them as engaged in the practical concerns of life: "We will not take to ourselves a God with God, nor steal, nor commit adultery, nor kill our children, nor come with a calumny which we have invented against our consciences, nor will we be disobedient to thee in what shall be just and proper." (S. 60. 12.)

^a"God's is the east and the west; so which-ever way ye turn, there is the Face of God; verily,

present decay of religious fervour our travellers are edified by the profound humility and attention of the Turks and Persians. Cleanliness is the key of prayer; the frequent lustration of the hands, the face, and the body, which was practised of old by the Arabs,^a is solemnly enjoined by the Koran. The words and attitudes of supplication, as it is performed either sitting, or standing, or prostrate on the ground, are prescribed by custom or authority;^b but the prayer is poured forth in short and fervent ejaculations; the measure of zeal is not exhausted by a tedious liturgy; and each Musselman, for his own person, is invested with the character of a priest.^c Every spot for the

God is Vast, Knowing.” (Koran, S. 2. 109) “Every one has a direction to which he turns (in prayer), but do ye (Muslims), hasten emulously after good works.” (S. 2. 143.)

^a *Sic.*

^b By no authority.

^c In Islam, all humanity is equally pure and good. They have alike “the baptism of God; and who is better than God at baptizing?” (Koran, S. 2. 138.) Every man rises up to his God without the intervention of a priest or hierophant. “We are of God, and to Him we go.” (S. 2. 156.)

service of God is equally pure.^a The Mahometans indifferently pray in the chamber or in the street. The Friday in each week is set apart for the useful institution of public worship: the people assemble in the mosque, and the imam, some respectable elder, ascends the pulpit to begin the prayer and pronounce the sermon. But the Mahometan religion is destitute of priesthood or sacrifice;^b and

^a Cf. *Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad*, 711.

^b The so-called ‘sacrifice’ on the day of Id ul Adha is but a continuation of the old Arab custom observed in commemoration of Abraham’s offer to sacrifice his son in pursuance of a supposed behest (in a dream), referred to in Genesis xxii. 1-13. But there is nothing of the idea of ‘sacrifice’ in it, nothing of the old-world Vedic, Jewish, or Christian conception of “remission of sins.” I quote from the Koran the story of Abraham’s sacrifice as given by Mohammed:

(Abraham said,) My Lord! grant me a righteous (issue), and We gave him the glad tidings of (a son we should have) a meek youth. Afterwards when he had attained to the age to work with him, (Abraham) said (to him), O my child! verily I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice thee; look then what it is that thou seest (I should do). He said, O my father! do what thou art bidden: thou shalt find me, if God please, to be of the steadfast. And when they had striven with each other (to fulfil the Divine

the independent spirit of fanaticism looks down with contempt on the ministers and the slaves of superstition." How happy would it have been for Europe if the religion of Jesus, in a similar manner,

behest), and (Abraham) had laid himself down upon his forehead (to thank God for the meek youth who so humbly submitted to what his father bade him), We called out to him, (saying), O Abraham ! now hast thou verified the vision, (and thou need do no more).

Verily, thus We recompense the well-doers ; verily this was a manifest trial, and We ransomed (the son) by a grand victim (the piety of Abraham's heart), and We left for (Abraham) among posterity (the salutation), Peace be upon Abraham ! Thus We recompense the well-doers ; verily he was one of Our faithful servants." (Koran, S. 37. 99-111.)

The reader will not have failed to observe the difference in Mohammed's version of the ancient Hebrew legend and the divesting it of everything miraculous fastened upon it by later fictions. In fact, by the thoroughly moral tone imparted to the whole story, Mohammed at once did away with the doctrine of all sacrifice (human and other), hitherto implicitly believed and acted on by ignorant religionists to appease their angry God.

By no means does their flesh reach to God nor yet their blood, but piety from you reaches to Him. (S. 22. 37.)

Thus in Islam, the Id ul Adha is an annual festival, when Moslems from all parts of the world meet together at Mecca to fulfil on a grander scale the vision of Mohammed's conception of a real visible United Church.

had forbidden the use of priests or priesthoods! Only one single, plausible argument can be found for their use, that is, that they are necessary; but the Moravians, the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, and the Mohamedans, prove that it has no foundation, that religion can flourish without them. For surely it will not be said that the religion of Mohamed has not flourished. Mohamedism is reproached with copying its morality from the gospel; a philosopher, perhaps, may suspect that when the prophet was availing himself of the excellent moral precepts of Christianity, he had sense, not only to take the good, but to leave the evil; to adopt the morality, but to avoid the hired priesthood which, in his day, had filled the world with bloodshed and misery, and was rapidly reducing it to a state of the most debasing ignorance.

48. Persons may speculate upon the reason that caused the *wicked, false, and fraudulent imposture* of the Arabian, as it is called, to be devoid of this appendage, which the priests of the true and perfect

religion of Jesus have always held to be indispensable to its welfare, if not to its existence, and of course different opinions will be entertained; but, for my own part, I see nothing in the character of Mohamed to prevent me thinking it probable that the experience of what he saw passing around him determined his conduct in this most important affair.

Monasticism

49. In the days of Mohamed, and some centuries before them, a rage for celibacy and monachism had spread itself over the whole world: we read of monks being met with in bodies of many thousands at a time. Though he instituted a fast of thirty days to moderate the passions and to serve as a purification of the soul by the mortification of the body, yet he disapproved the voluntary penance of the Ascetics,¹ • the torment and glory of their lives. Works of supererogation were

¹ Gibbon.

• Cf. Koran, . 57. 27.

odious to a prophet who censured in his companions a rash vow of abstaining from flesh, and women, and sleep; and firmly declared that he would have no monks in his religion.* Mr. Gibbon has shewn that the swarms of fakkeers, dervises, &c., which disgrace his religion (as much as Christianity is disgraced by its monks), did not appear till about three hundred years after its institution.

50. Monastic establishments, corresponding societies the most complete and perfect, and also the most pernicious in their consequences to mankind of any that ever were established in the world, have been called the outworks, and monks the light troops, of the religion of purity and truth. The daring genius of the *impostor* despised such aid, and the religion of Islam flourished without, and even in despite of them.

51. In reading the gospels my astonishment has often been excited by the consideration, that the religion of Jesus

should have become the most priestly of any religion on the face of the earth; when almost every page of them abounds with expressions of reprobation of priests, and chief priests, and pharisees, their supporters, uttered by him, the most perfect model of a virtuous man that ever existed—a being par excellence excellent, (if tradition may be believed,) against whose character in the whole world there does not exist an iota of credible evidence. In the gospels not a word can be found, that I know of, to justify or excuse our hierarchies or priesthoods. Priests, excellent, worthy, and respectable, as many of them are, as a body, always have been and always will be the enemies, either secretly or openly, of the improvement of mankind. The way in which they have lately incarcerated the Rev. R. Taylor, and the Materialists the Carliles, the modern Vanini,¹ in

¹ Vaninus, a professor of Atheism, burnt in France for declaring his opinion, and refusing to play the hypocrite and profess a faith which he did not believe.

Newgate and Dorchester gaol, prove what they would do if the power of opinion did not prevent them.

Polygamy

52. Because Mohamed, following the example of the legislator of the oldest ceremonial religion west of the Euphrates, and as all Christians maintain, of the world, Moses, allowed his people, the descendants (as they say, and probably with truth) of Ishmael, the son of the father of the faithful, a plurality of wives,—he has been constantly abused, by Christians, to use their words, for *pandering to the base passions of his followers*. But why the allowance of a plurality of wives should be visited with such very harsh censure, I do not know. Surely the example of Solomon, and David, the man after God's own heart, *which he had found to fulfil his law*, might plead for a little mercy, particularly as Jesus nowhere expressly forbids it in any one of the twenty gospels which were written by some or other of the multitude of sects of his followers to record his

commands. Biologists and natural philosophers have found other reasons which might serve as some apology for this allowance, which will not apply to us cold-blooded, frog-like animals of northern climates, though they may be applicable to the descendants of Ishmael, natives of the scorching sands of the desert, or of the more favoured Arabia Felix, the country which became the lot of the interesting youth, an outcast expelled from his father's house, and thrown under a tree to perish with his unoffending mother, the victims of a termagant's zealous rage. If the unerring book of divine wisdom had not taught me otherwise, I have often thought that I should, in the happy lot of the Arabians, the descendants of Ishmael, so superior to that of the miserable and persecuted Jews, have seen the hand of retributive justice. For surely no one will prefer the temporal lot hitherto of the favoured people of God, to that of the wild, independent, high-minded, hospitable tribes of the never-conquered, virgin country of Arabia. The

world has bowed before the arms and trembled at the name of the descendants of the outcast Ishmael, but THEY have never either bowed or trembled, and I flatter myself and hope they never will. The history and the fortunes of the outcast Ishmael have always been to me peculiarly interesting. God forgive the wicked thought, if it be wicked; but now knowing the fortunes of the two, and of their families, I would rather be the outcast Ishmael than the pampered Isaac, the father of the favoured people of God.

53. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see them restored to the state of civilization, and to the rank they held in the world under their illustrious caliphs; but I sincerely hope that they will never be civilized by the European sword.¹

¹ For using a similar expression to this in another work, the author has been called a fiend by an anonymous writer, whose bigotry did not permit him to see the difference between conquest and civilization. This learned gentleman, who, the author suspects, could not read the work he criticised, has been kind enough to chide him for

Mohammed's Difficulties

54. When Mohamed surveyed the laws and customs of his countrymen, he found many political or religious institutions existing, for which it may be difficult to account. Such as were inoffensive or thought to be conducive to health, he continued: such as were pernicious, as far as was in his power, he abolished: and such of the latter as he could not abolish, he regulated.* Of the first, circum-

his ignorance in treating of the moon's period of twenty-eight days, a period allowed to be taken from the moon, and much used by the ancient Egyptian, Arabian, Chaldean, and Indian astronomers. The author is much obliged to this gentleman, whose name he knows very well, and he begs to return his kindness by informing him, that the moon has two periods, one of twenty-seven days and a fraction, and the other of twenty-nine and a fraction, and that twenty-eight is the mean.

In the same manner he has been accused of ignorance in asserting that the Targums were written long after the time of Christ, a fact he inferred from the absence of all notice of them in the works of Origen or the earlier fathers.

* It has been given to no teacher in the world to efface existing society. Mohammed, therefore, wherever he found difficulty in the matter of ex-

cision,^a for the origin of which health is the cause assigned by the celebrated philosophic Jew Philo,¹ is one instance. The prohibition of the use of swine's flesh,^b con-

¹ Boulainvillier, *Vie de Mahomed*, p. 147.

isting society which he could by no means otherwise control, quietly laid down rules, so that when the time was ripe for it, they might from within work out its abolition. No teacher before Mohammed ever gave any thought to slavery and concubinage, to polygamy and divorce, or to the status of women. It was reserved for Mohammed alone to check some and regulate others by positive enactments such as were never before enunciated in history.

* Circumcision is not so much as once mentioned in the Koran, nor enjoined. It is esteemed by the Mohammedans, along with the wearing of beard and the custom of sacrifice, as an institution of Abraham.

• This supposed prohibition is based, first, upon the unclean nature generally attributed to the animal in the East, as also in the Hebrew scriptures (*Cf.* Leviticus 11. 7; Deuteronomy 14. 8; Isaiah 65. 4), and secondly, upon a consequently faulty translation of the Koranic verses (S. 16. 115; S. 6. 145; S. 2. 173; S. 5. 3). But, as a matter of fact, the Koran nowhere mentions any particular food as prohibited unless in very general terms, never naming any *particular* animal. I will content myself with but one quotation:

sidered in those climates to be unwholesome, which he continued, is another (still continued at Rome in summer); and the plurality of wives and concubines, which he could not prevent, he restricted by the most severe enactments, providing for the rights of the wives and the maintenance and comfort of the concubines.*

Say thou, I find not in what has been revealed to me, anything forbidden to the eater who eats it, except it be dead (of itself), or blood poured forth, or the food of the swine—for, verily, it is abominable. . . . (S. 6. 145.)

The food of the swine being generally supposed to be stinking and putrid. Or, according to the theory that Arabic quadrilateral and quinqueliteral words are composed of two, the word 'khinzir' is a compound of 'khaniza' and 'nazura,' meaning 'stinking and unwholesome;' the word 'lahm' meaning 'food,' in Arabic as in Hebrew. Thus 'lahm al-khinzir' (S. 16. 115; S. 2. 173; S. 5. 3) means 'stinking and unwholesome food;' the construction of the word, like many others in Arabic, being Hebrew.

* In a world, when no law interdicted polygamy, Mohammed gave the following:

And of His signs is, that He has created for you, out of yourselves, wives, that ye may confide in them; and He has placed love and tenderness between you. (Koran, S. 30. 21.)

Ye may marry of such women as seem proper for you, twos and threes and fours

55. I find it asserted in the Oriental Collections of Sir. W. Ouseley, p. 108, that "the warm regions of Asia make a difference between the sexes not known to the climates of Europe, where the decay of each is mutual and gradual; whereas in Asia it is given to man alone to arrive at a green old age." If this be true, it goes far to excuse Mohamed in allowing a plurality of wives, and it sufficiently accounts for the facts that Jesus never expressly declared himself on this subject, but left it to the regulation of the governments of countries; as it is evident that what would be proper for Asia would be improper for Europe.

Mohammed's Polygamy

56. The passage respecting the wives

(*i.e.*, any number): but if ye fear ye cannot act equitably, then one only, or what your protecting hands have already got; that is the chief thing—that ye act not partially. (Koran, S. 4. 3.).

But ye can never act equitably between women although ye fain would do it; (S. 4. 129.) for God has not made a man two hearts within him (S. 33. 4.).

Concubinage is expressly prohibited throughout the Koran. Cf. S. 24. 32; S. 4. 25; S. 5. 5.

of Mohamed are evidently contrived by the makers of the Koran to justify the possession of a great number of wives by the monarch; it carries the brand of the caliph Othman on the face of it so clearly, that it cannot be misunderstood or mistaken.*

57. It is probable that the necessity of the regulation of the number of wives did not occur to Mohamed till the latter part of his mission, as we find him exceeding the number allowed by the Koran. It is said, that in the Koran he made an exception of himself, because he was the prophet of God, and had a particular privilege as such.^b This is the reason

* Unjust reflections these against a noble Caliph. See notes, pp. 55-7, *ante.*

^b Why should Mohammed, if he were to play the libertine, at all restrict the number of wives a man might have, when no law, no religion did anything in that direction? and where was the *need* of making an exception of himself to have a particular privilege? He could only leave the subject untouched as the prophets and seers before him had done. But, as a matter of fact, there was no special provision for him in law, and no privilege. Mohammed promulgated his laws on the subject (S. 4. 3, 129) some years after he had been at

very likely to be given by Othman, the compiler of that book; but it is much more likely that by Mohamed the limitation of the number of wives to four,^a was

Medinah; by which time he was already allied to the number of wives he had. At this stage, Mohamed even gave his wives the alternative of either separating themselves from him or remaining linked together in weal and woe; (S. 33. 28, 29, 51); and when they preferred to continue with him he denied himself the privilege of marrying again even on the demise of some or all of his wives, which his followers were free to.

It shall not be lawful to thee (Mohammed) to take other women (to wife) after this, nor to replace them by (other) wives, although their beauty please thee, except what thy protecting hand has already got to possess.
And God is watching over all things. (S. 33. 52)

^a It is a popular error to suppose that for his followers Mohammed limited the number of wives to four. The words in the original signify, as I have given above, "twos, threes, and fours"—any number. (*Cf.* also S. 35. 1.) Here read the verse S. 4. 3 from note given above. There was *no* limit, unless the whole was cut to its legitimate precision—*one only*.

Of course, the self-seeking Mohammedan doctors (not to be out-done in this respect by their counterpart in Christendom—the clergy) have from time to time sought to justify their own whimsicalities and the caprices and tyrannical dictates of monarchs and sultans whose obsequious servants they were. Abu'l-Fadl, in the *Ayini Akbari*, relates that a certain docto

held to be merely a civil or municipal, but not a religious, regulation;* and the mode in which the Grand Seignior and other monarchs, men extremely religious in other respects, indulge in a great number of wives as distinguished from concubines, seems to shew that they so consider it. Besides, these wives are held to be strictly legal; for, if the first-born son of the monarch be from the fourth, the fifth, or the tenth wife, if he be only the first born, he is looked upon as the legal heir to the throne, and the mother receives all the honours due to the mother of the future emperor.

Intermarriage

58. The Arabian lawgiver provides for the honourable marriage of Jewish and Christian women with Mohamedans, but

married eighteen wives, for he read the text already quoted, "two and two, three and three, and four and four." And in the same work he says that another doctor had eight wives, for he only read the verse "two + three + four."

* Mohammed esteemed everything that affected the practical concerns of life as thing religious.

prohibits them as concubines.* Have either Jews or Christians ever thought of making any reciprocal provision?¹

The Mohammedan Lent

59. But if the allowance of a plurality of wives to his followers, though guarded with many very strict regulations, may afford to the Christian priests a momentary triumph; yet there are some other of his precepts which may induce the cool inquirer after truth to doubt, or perhaps to deny altogether, the charge of *pandering to their buse passions*. The fast of the Ramadan, which, by the circulating effect of the lunar year, must often fall in the hottest period of an Asiatic summer, when the pious Musselmen are forbidden to taste a morsel of food, or even a single drop of water to quench their parching thirst, from morning to evening, for thirty days together, is surely something not very like

¹ West. Rev. No. IX. p. 221.

* Koran, S. 5. 5.

pandering to their passions or appetites. What will the votary of pleasure, the indolent son of luxury, say to the pilgrimage to Mecca? Mohamed surely will not be accused of pandering to pleasure in ordering, if indeed he did order (which I doubt), this terrible journey.^a

Games of Chance

60. By the law of Mohamed all games of chance were expressly prohibited:^b the beneficial tendency of this law surely no one will deny. He is refused all merit for his morality, because it is said that he only copied it from the Bible. I have not observed the prohibition of this vice either in the decalogue or the gospels; but as he admitted the divine missions of both Moses and Jesus. and professed to build his religion on them as a foundation,

^a He did indeed order. Cf. Koran, S. 22. 27, etc.; S. 2. 196, etc.

^b "They ask thee about intoxicants and gambling; say thou, In both there is great sin, and also things of use to men; but their sin is greater than their use." (Koran, S. 2. 219; cf. S. 5. 90, 91; etc.)

it does not seem to me that he did any wrong, or acted in any way inconsistently in adopting such parts of both these religions as appeared to him to be their pure and unadulterated doctrine. Indeed, as he was in fact a Christian, I do not see how he could do otherwise.

Intoxicants

61. Historians relate that the Arabians, previous to the time of Mohamed, were much addicted to drunkenness as well as gaming. By two decrees of the *impostor*, who, as was just now observed, is accused of *pandering to the passions* of his people, both the use of wine and gaming are totally abolished.^a We find no canting recommendation to sobriety and moderation; gaming and drunkenness are pronounced unpardonable sins, and cut up by the roots at once. The passions, prejudices, habits of his followers, are all set at defiance; all must be sacrificed, or they could not be his disciples. There was

^a See above.

no stopping half way ; no house of rest for the weary pilgrim ; he must go the whole journey, or he need not set out at all. As Mr. Gibbon justly observes, the painful restraints from these seducing luxuries are, doubtless, infringed by the libertine and eluded by the hypocrite ; but the legislator by whom they are enacted cannot surely be justly accused of alluring his proselytes by the indulgence of their sensual passions. Happy, indeed, I think it would have been for Europe, if it had been consistent with the ways of Divine Wisdom to have prohibited them in the religion of Jesus.

62. It is constantly said by the Christians, that though wine be forbidden, opium is not ; and, that the abuse of this drug is just as bad as the abuse of spirituous or fermented liquors.* This is very true ;

* But Mohammed's word for 'intoxicants' is 'al-khamr,' anything that disturbs the brain ; (S. 2. 219 ; etc.) and if opium does indeed stupefy, it is certainly of 'khamr,' and as such forbidden to the Moslem even as wine.

but perhaps the prophet of Arabia may be excused when it is recollect, that in his day the drug was not known *probably*, and the abuse of it was not known *certainly*; and he never pretended to omniscience or the gift of prophecy. I must abstain, because it would be profane, or at least it would give occasion to malevolence to accuse me of profaneness or arrogance in presuming to propose an amendment to the already perfect religion of Jesus, or otherwise I should have observed, that it appears to my humble comprehension and confined views, that the happiness of mankind would not have been lessened if a prohibition of wine, spirits, and games of chance, had been found in the gospels; nor would it have been any worse if the omniscience of Jesus, which he is held to have possessed, but which Mohamed did not pretend to possess, had induced him to prohibit at the same time the use of intoxicating drugs, except in such cases as they were actually necessary as medicine.

Mohammed's sensual Paradise

63. Persons prejudiced against Mohamed may condemn him for his sensual paradise; but, in fact, no paradise can be imagined which is not sensual, because (as Mr. Locke has proved) no idea can be entertained by man except through the medium of his senses; it, therefore, necessarily follows, that if he be to have any idea of a paradise at all, it must be sensual.

64. But even if we admit the prophet to have taught that the happiness of a future state consisted of sensual enjoyments, when it is recollect that he (not admitting the genuineness of St. Paul's Epistles) had not the benefit of St. Paul's explanation of the difference between a corporeal body and a spiritual body, it does not seem an unpardonable sin that he should have believed it a necessary consequence, that, if the *real material* body were to rise again to a state of future happiness, its bliss should consist of those pleasures which human experience teaches us it is as a body only capable

of enjoying. What other pleasures it may be capable of enjoying *we* know not; through the medium of our senses, and from experience, *the only modes by which we acquire ideas*, we can derive no information. St. Paul tells us we die a corporeal body, we shall rise a spiritual body: this is all very well in the mouth of St. Paul, who is believed to have had the benefit of divine illumination to assist him in understanding it, and may be very well for such as have the benefit of his inspiration; but if the prophet had not this assistance, it is no ways surprising that he should not understand that which in common language is a contradiction in terms. In common language, without the assistance of divine illumination, a man may as well say a round square, a silent noise, as a spiritual body; these expressions would be contradictions in terms, if found anywhere but in inspired writings, in which are many mysteries, and, as St. Peter says,¹ "*things hard to be understood.*"

¹ Second Epistle, chap. iii. ver. 16.

65. But Mohamed was so far from making all the happiness of a future life to consist of low corporeal enjoyments, that the highest pleasure and reward of the faithful was to consist in the contemplation of the face of God, which was said to give such exquisite delight, that in respect thereof all the other pleasures of paradise will be forgotten and lightly esteemed.¹ However, I think an impartial judge would not say that this was more to be condemned for sensuality than the account which describes the mansions of the blessed as a glorious and magnificent city, built of gold and precious stones, with twelve gates, through the streets of which there runs a river of water of life, with trees which bear twelve sorts of fruits, and leaves of a healing virtue; and which in another place describes the blessed as eating and drinking at the table of their Saviour.² The reader will please to under-

¹ Sale's Prel. Dis., sect. iv. p. 133.

² Rev. xxi. 10, &c., and xxii. 1, 2; Luke xxii. 29, 30, &c.

stand that I mean to cast no adverse reflection on these figurative accounts, but only to observe, that it is very absurd and unjust to approve the one, the Christian, and to condemn the other, the Mohamedan. If he wish to know how the first fathers of the church considered them, he may apply to Iræneus, who describes the bunches of grapes, in the time of the Millennium, as crying to the faithful to come and eat them.

66. Though Mohamed admits the families and wives of the faithful to accompany them to paradise, the latter are described as the most chaste and virtuous, and devoid of those passions which give so much offence to the patrons of monastic institutions. In short, all the expressions respecting a sensual paradise, about which they are so much reprobated by the Christians, the Mohamedans contend are merely figurative.

67. An energetic and liberal-minded writer in the Westminster Review,¹ has

¹ Jan. 1826, No. IX. p. 216.

so well vindicated the Prophet of the East, that the author cannot resist the temptation of giving rather a long extract from his essay. "After all the abuse that has been thrown upon Mohamed for his paradise—and it makes the head and front of every man's vituperative argument—the simple fact is, that he promised the restoration of man to the Mosaic Eden; where, if there were many Adams, it was equally inevitable there must be many Eves. This may not reach the elevation of 'what eye hath not seen nor ear heard;' but it at all events attains the point at which the Christian theology sets out. His words continually are, 'Theirs shall be the gardens of Eden':¹ and then he proceeds to enumerate, the rivers, the trees, the apples, and, above all, the 'helpmates meet,' of the Mosaic account. That he excludes women from his paradise is one of the stupid falsehoods that have been fastened on him by his enemies; for

¹ Koran, xiii. 25, xviii. 32, xxxviii. 52.

he reiterates the declaration that 'who so worketh good, whether male or female, shall enter paradise,'¹ where the same glories are distinctly promised to both. And lest there should be any doubt whether the wives of the believers are to keep them company, he expressly describes the faithful as entering the garden of Eden 'with their fathers, their wives, and their children';² while, in another place, he says, 'they and their wives shall recline in shady groves.'³ But the Eden of Milton is not more chaste, and is infinitely less reserved, than that of the Arabian; and no contrast can be stronger than between his imagery and that of the Hebrew poetry, which he might have taken for his model. In his description of the women of paradise, there is nothing to excite a voluptuous idea. They are said to be virgins—like the virgin daughter of Bethuel: and, like the other believers, they are restored to the prime

¹ Ibid. xvi. 97, xl. 41, xlviii. 5, lvii. 12.

² Ibid. xiii. 25.

³ Ibid. xxxvi. 5.

of youthful beauty, in which mankind may be supposed to have come from the hands of the Creator. But they have neither necks like towers of ivory, nor mouths that cause the lips of those that are asleep to speak, nor bosoms like clusters of the vine, nor breasts like two young roes that are twins feeding among lilies, nor the joints of their thighs like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman. They neither invite their paradisaic partner to kiss them with the kisses of his mouth, nor to lie like a bundle of myrrh all night between their breasts, nor to turn and be till day-break like a young hart upon the mountains of spices, nor to get him to the mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense till the shadows flee away, nor to take a thousand current coins from 'his vineyard,' while the keeper of the fruit claims two hundred in return, nor tempt him to the fields, under promise of there giving their bosoms to his joy. These are the luxuries of other creeds, the figures which the nations of

Europe think fitted to excite religious hopes and pious expectations. The spouses of the Arabian teacher sit with their dark eyes cast down modestly in the presence of their husbands, like pearls concealing themselves within their shells; and even the patriarchal polygamy seems forgotten, as something tolerable on earth, but not good enough for heaven. The beautiful pairs recline by the never-failing waters of Eden, surrounded by the harmless luxuries which constitute domestic comfort or splendour in the East; and if they sometimes fill their cup with a richer draught, it is described as innocent and harmless, with no power to disturb the intellect or disorder the mind. Their converse is unearthly and pure, and tinged with the delightful consciousness of souls escaped from earth and safe in heaven:

—“No vain discourse there heard, nor thought of sin;
But this one word, Peace—Peace.¹

Koran, lvi. 27, 28.

¹ Non audient ibi sermonem futilem, neque incitationem ad peccatam.

"68. Such are literally the words of the much-abused Arabian; but still the Koran must be licentious, and all the figures of European theologians severe and blameless and divine. To judge from the outcry, it might be supposed that a whole book of the Koran had been devoted to the exhibition of voluptuous delight. And because woman, pure, innocent, and downcast, is found seated in the second paradise by her husband's side, comes this sacerdotal hubbub, and monkish delicacy is up in arms in defence of the purity of heaven.—If a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures were published, in which every word capable of the change was altered from the reserved and decent one to that which was vulgar and immodest, and where a licentious commentary was attached to every passage where the subject could, by any perversion, be made the vehicle, attended with insupportable

Sed tantum modo dictum : Pax, Pax.

Translation of Maracci.

mistranslations and misconstructions for the sake of hanging an odious meaning upon the writer,—it would give some idea of the medium through which the Koran was introduced to Europe. It was thus that juggling monks played their low machinery, that what they called the altar and the throne might flourish, by setting one half of mankind to hate and worry the other.”*

69. Though that most Christian and pious emperor, Theodosius, decreed the destruction of the beautiful temples of the ancients, the priests had not the same objections to their rites and ceremonies. The tawdry, dirty, disgusting churches of the Romish and Greek Christians in every part of Europe--their pictures, images, festivals, processions, and ceremonies, taken from the very worst parts—the dregs of pagan idolatry—prove that the priests of the religion of purity could condescend to the basest of accommodations to delude or to in-

crease the number of their proselytes, a practice actually recommended by the person admitted by a majority of Christians to be the very head of the religion itself.¹ *Pander to the base passions* of his followers, indeed! Where can any thing like this be found in the religion of the IMPOSTOR? The prejudices of the Pagans or of the Christians are equally set at defiance. No holy water, no relic, no image, no picture, no saint, no mother of God, disgrace his religion. No such doctrines as the efficacy of faith without works, or that of a death-bed repentance, plenary indulgences, absolution, or auricular confession, operate first to corrupt, then to deliver up his followers into the power of a priesthood, which would of course be always more corrupt and more degraded than themselves. No, indeed! The adoration of one God, without mother, or mystery, or pretended miracle, and the acknowledgement that he, a mere man, was sent to preach

¹ The Pope at that time, Gregory.

the duty of offering adoration to the Creator alone, constituted the simple doctrinal part of the religion of the Unitarian of Arabia.

Teaching of the Koran

70. Like the gospel of Jesus, the Koran is the poor man's friend. The injustice of the great and rich is every where reprobated. It is no respecter of persons. And it is to the immortal honour of the writer of that book, be he Mohamed, the illustrious prophet of Arabia, or his third successor, the Caliph Othman, as the author believes, not a precept in it can be pointed out which contains the slightest leaning to political servility. And as the Westminster Reviewer has justly observed, if there be any thing that ever holds an eastern despot in check, it is probably an unceremonious verse from the Koran in the mouth of a daring remonstrant.¹

71. Time and human infirmity in some respects have corrupted the religion of

Mohamed, the *impostor*, as they are allowed to have done that of Jesus. But if the religion of the impostor have submitted to the casualties to which every thing in this world is liable, perhaps a little allowance will be made when it is considered, that in much the greatest part of the Christian world, as I have stated above, the religion of purity and truth, the foundation of Mohamedism, is yet disgraced by the most degrading superstitions.

Relief of the Poor

72. The prophet has been accused of the most cruel and blood-thirsty disposition; but yet it is remarkable that he extended the duties of charity to the brute creation; and the Koran repeatedly inculcates, not as a merit, but as a strict and indispensable duty, the relief of the indigent and unfortunate. Mohamed is perhaps the only legislator who has defined the precise measure of charity: the standard may vary with the degree and nature of property, as it consists either in money, in corn or cattle, in

fruits or merchandise ; but the Musselman does not accomplish the law, unless he bestows a tenth of his revenue; and if his conscience accuses him of fraud or extortion, the tenth, under the idea of restitution, is enlarged to a fifth.¹ *

73. In no religion, except in that of Mohamed, can any thing like this be found. That the Christian priests should teach, *what is not in the gospels*, the necessity of giving to themselves a tenth, is not surprising. But they forgot the poor, *which is there*. Not so Mohamed ; he remembered the poor, but forgot the priests.

Fighting against Infidels

74. It is true that the Koran inculcates the merit and duty of fighting against infidels,^b and this is indeed what

¹ Gibbon.

* This is wrong, and no part of Mohammed's Islam : "God accepts no prayer without purity (of heart), and no almsgiving out of embezzled money." (*Sayings*, 735.)

^b This is not true. I give below the words of the

might well be expected; but Mohamed can no more be made responsible for what was written by Othman, than Jesus can for what was taught by Leo IV.¹ to the Christians to war against all infidels, enemies of the holy faith, well exemplified in the crusades and the knights of Malta. But the battle over,

¹ Sale's Prel. Dis., note, p. 190.

Koran which have been so very wrongly taken to inculcate this:

Permission is given to those who are fought against (to fight), for that they have been wronged,—and verily God has the power to help them;—who have been turned out of their homes wrongfully, for that they said, Our Lord is God. And if it were not for God's repelling (the violence of) some men by others, surely cloisters and churches and synagogues, and (all) places of worship, wherein the name of God is mentioned frequently, would be utterly destroyed. (S. 22. 39, 40.)

And fight in the cause of God with those who fight with you, but transgress not; verily, God loves not the transgressors. . . . But if they desist, then let there be no hostility, except against the wrong-doers (S. 2. 190, 193; cf. S. 60. 8, 9.)

The Koran is the only scripture in the world which has expressly interdicted compulsion in religion in so many words—"Let there be no compulsion in religion: the right is certainly distinct from the wrong." (S. 2. 256; Cf. S. 109.)

the sword was sheathed, and a trifling tribute was the price of protection and toleration, never denied by the followers of Mohamed.

Internal Purity

75. The Mohamedans have been accused of placing a dependence upon their ablutions and purifications. But those are condemned who are superstitiously solicitous in exterior purifications, avoiding those persons who are not so nice as themselves, at the same time that they have their minds lying waste, and overrun with pride, ignorance, and hypocrisy.¹ • And though much praying

¹ Poc. Spec. pp. 302, &c.; Sale, Prel. Dis., sect. iv. p. 140.

* Among the recorded sayings of Mohammed are the following :

"Verily, in the body there is a piece of flesh : when it is in good condition, the whole body is in good condition, and when it is corrupt, the whole body is corrupt : it is the heart." (*Ibid.*, 320.)

"Verily, God looks not to your figures, nor to your bodies, but He looks into your hearts and to your works of piety." (*Ibid.*, 704.)

is inculcated, yet the most punctual observance of the external rites and ceremonies is held to be of little avail, if performed without due attention, reverence, devotion, and *hope*: so that the Mohamedans must not be considered to content themselves with the mere opus operatum, or imagine their whole religion to be placed therein.¹ *

Idea of Recompense

76. But Mr. Sale admits that it is the constant doctrine of the Koran that the

¹ *Ibid.* p. 144.

The adultery of the eye is looking (lustfully), the adultery of the ear is hearing (what is wrong), the adultery of the tongue is speaking (what is wrong), the adultery of the hand is seizing (wrongfully), the adultery of the feet is walking (with unlawful intents), and the heart lusts and desires, and the private parts do either confirm or nullify. (*Ibid.*, 18.)

* Amr b. Abasah says, "I said, And what is the best prayer? the Prophet said, A long-continued piety." (*Ibid.*, 217.)

No prayer of a worshipper is unanswered so long as he prays not for sin or to cut off the ties of kinship. (*Ibid.* 738.)

The best of prayers is persevering patiently for its fulfilment" (*Ibid.*, 740.)

felicity of each person will be proportioned to his deserts, and that there will be abodes of different degrees of happiness great advantage being given in all cases to the poor.¹

Faith and Repentance

77. How different this from the modern superstition of the efficacy of faith without works, so finely refuted by Mr. Locke, when he proves that faith is a matter of necessity, not of choice !

78. The Koran says, "Verily repentance will be accepted with God, from those who do evil ignorantly, and then repent speedily: unto them will God be turned: for God is knowing and wise. But no repentance will be accepted from those who do evil until the time when death presenteth itself unto one of them, and he saith, Verily, I repent now!"² ▲

79. This text alone is quite enough

¹ Prel. Dis. p. 129

² Sale, ch. iv.

to account for the superior state of the morality of most Mohamedan nations over that of Christian nations: a mortifying fact, the truth of which every unprejudiced traveller is obliged to admit. How can any thing but vice and crime be expected where faith is preferred to works, and where the heretical doctrine prevails, that a death-bed repentance is to cure all sin?

80. But how can any thing better be expected by those who give the Bible to be expounded by unlearned mechanics, which it is impossible to understand without a considerable knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, and respecting the proper translation of which no two doctors have ever agreed?

81. Mr. Gibbon seems to have fallen into a mistake in supposing that by good works, the prophet only meant such as were performed by the professors of Islamism.* No doubt a preference in the

* In the Koran the word generally used is 'as-salihât' (right deeds), though 'al-khairât' (good works or beneficent deeds) is also used. The words conve

heavenly mansions is given in the Koran, as may well be expected, to its believers;^a but inferior places are assigned to many others, according to *the good works* which they have performed. For great merit is ascribed to those who perform good works, contrary to the pernicious dogma of millions of Christians, who hold as I have often heard it held from the pulpit, that *merit has nothing to do with salvation.*

82. The Koran says, "Certainly the faithful, (so Mohamed calls his sectaries,)

the meanings as I have given them, and admit of no sectarian interpretation.

^a This is by no means true. In the Koran, all well-doers, of whatever creed, are rewarded alike. Speaking of the Jews, Christians, and others who have received the scriptures, it says :

Yet they are not (all) alike: there is among the people of the book an upright section: they recite the injunctions of God in the night-time as they worship; they believe in God and in the last day, and bid what is just and forbid what is wrong, and hasten emulously in bevenolent deeds; and these are of the righteous. And what they do of good, shall by no means be ungratefully denied, for God well knows the pious. (S. 3. 113-5; cf. S. 2. 62; S. 5. 69.)

the Jews, the Christians, the Sabeans, and in general whoever believes in one only God, and in a day of judgment, AND PRACTISES VIRTUE, will be rewarded by God: he need not be afraid."¹

83. I think if there had been one clear undisputed passage in the gospels similar in doctrine to this, we should not have seen such associations disgracing all civilized nations as those of the knights of Malta,—bands of noble and royal banditti—pirates, who ought to be hanged by the Turks whenever they are taken, for the vow they make never to be at peace with them on any terms. The holy allies once wished to re-establish this detestable order of hypocrites and fanatics, but fortunately the public opinion and the press of Britain prevented it.

84. Spanheim was a very celebrated man, and no man, I apprehend, will doubt his piety and learning, justly applauded by Mr. Sale, who says, though he owned

¹ Assem. Bibl. Orient. T. III. Pt. ii. pp. 611, 612; Beaus. Hist. Man., Liv. ix. ch. i.; Koran, ch ii. p. 12; ch. v. p. 135.

Mohamed to be a wicked impostor, yet acknowledged him to have been richly furnished with natural endowments, beautiful in his person, of a subtle wit agreeable behaviour, shewing liberality to the poor, courtesy to every one, fortitude against his enemies, and, above all, a high reverence for the name of God; severe against the perjured, adulterers, murderers, slanderers, prodigals, covetous, false witnesses, &c.; a great preacher of patience, charity, mercy, beneficence, gratitude, honouring of parents and superiors; and a frequent celebrator of the Divine praises.¹

85. The Christian priests, in their writings against Mohamed, constantly accuse him of making converts by intimidation; by threats of hell and eternal punishment to those who do not adopt his religion.^a

¹ Hist. Eccles., sec. vii. lem. 5 et 7. Sale, Pref., p. 6.

^a There is no intimidation: the consequences of a wicked life are only painted in glowing terms in order to awaken some consideration in men. (S. 74.)

This is true with respect to some parts of the Koran, and is directly in contradiction to other parts, where it is admitted that Christians, Jews, and Sabeans, if *they performed good works*, need not be afraid. But admitting that it is really the doctrine of the prophet, it seems rather extraordinary that it should be brought as a charge against him by those who receive the gospels and epistles, where the doctrine is laid down in the broadest language: *He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*¹

86. With more truth the doctrines of fate and predestination may be brought as a charge against him; of contriving or

¹ Mark xvi. 16.

32-48; S. 104. 5-9; S. 2. 167; S. 102. 3-7; S. 80. 33; S. 68. 42; S. 73. 18.) As against this, see Matt. 18. 8; 25. 31-46; Mark 9. 43-8; Luke 12. 5; 16. 23, 24; Matt. 10. 28; 23. 33; Rev. 14. 9-11; 19. 1-4, 20; 20. 1-3, 10; Rom. 2. 5; 5. 12, 17-9; 1 Cor. 15. 21, 22; Gal. 3. 22; Acts 4. 12; also Matt. 7. 14; 22. 13, 14; Luke 12. 46; 13. 23, 24; 17. 29, 30; Rev. 6. 12-7; 21. 8; 22. 15; 1 Cor. 6. 9; 2 Thess. 1. 7-9; Acts 4. 12; Ps. 9. 17; John 3. 36; 1 Peter 4. 7; 2 Peter 3. 7, 10.

adopting to them increase or encourage his followers.^a The doctrines alluded to in the last paragraph seem to be almost a necessary appendage to all religions; but these are not. However, whether right or wrong, designed or undesigned, the belief that every ball was labelled for its owner, that the utmost excess of care could not vary or delay a man's final doom, encouraged his followers to fight with astonishing bravery, and give them the victory in every encounter.

The Night-journey

87. In the Koran there is an account of a journey which Mohamed took, along with the angel Gabriel, through the seven heavens to the throne of God.^b This is

^a See my chapter on Islam.

^b There is no such account in the Koran. It was when after twelve long years of persecution by his townsmen, Mohammed had found it impossible for himself and his followers to continue at Mecca, and some of his converts from among the pilgrims of distant Medinah had returned with half-a-dozen fresh converts from the same city—it was about this time that hopes of the dawning of a new day, and glorious scenes of a happy future, now and then flitted across the mind of Mohammed. In one of these broodings occurred the notable vision

evidently nothing but a dream or vision, (similar to the journey of Jesus with the devil from the mountain to the pinnacle of the temple, which divines now defend on the ground that it is a vision and nothing more,) and, like most dreams, it is a mass of nonsense. The Christian priests, who are as much afraid of ridicule, when applied to their own religion, as they are fond of applying it to the religions of others, make themselves merry with the horse called Borak, on which Mohamed rode in a few seconds from Mecca to Jerusalem, asking what sort of a horse Borak could be. The fact is, the word in the oriental language means, and ought to be translated, *a flash of lightning*—a very dangerous horse to ride, indeed, except in a dream or vision. The angel Gabriel took him from the side of his wife Ayesha, when she was asleep,

of the Night-journey which was to materialise the following year with such marvellous effects. This is referred to briefly in the Koran, S. 17. 1. But there is no mention of Gabriel, the seven heavens, or the Borak.

and he performed the wonderful journey before she awaked, so that she never knew that he had been absent. The doctors of the law all consider it a vision. A Mohamedan, who cannot be expected to have much respect for St. Paul, would perhaps observe, that his journey, described in 2 Cor. xii., is not very unlike that of the prophet of Arabia.

Slavery

88. It seems unfortunate for the cause of humanity, that neither Jesus nor Mohamed should have thought it right to abolish slavery. It may be said, that when they directed their proselytes to do to others as they would be done unto, they virtually abolished it.* This is plausible,

* But slavery has its sanction in the Bible. Cf. Exodus 21. 2-6, 20, 21 ; Leviticus 25. 44-6 ; Deuteronomy 20. 10-15 ; 21. 10-14 ; also Numbers 31. 1-18, 25-30, 32-40 ; Deuteronomy 24. 1-3 ; Judges 21. 7-14, 19-23 ; Ezra 10. 2, 3, 11, 17 ; Nehemiah 13. 23-30. The New Testament only sanctified and upheld the Old Testament. Cf. Matthew 5. 17-9 ; 2 Timothy 3. 15, 16.

Mohammed found slavery an existing institution and took various measures to put a stop to it. *First*, in morals, the manumission of slaves was declared to be among the first duties of man (Koran,

but unfortunately it is not in practice

S. 90. 13) and an act of real goodness and true piety (S. 2. 177.). *Secondly*, in law, the slaves were allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their service, and in case the unfortunate beings had no present means of gain and wanted to earn in some other employment enough for that purpose, they were allowed to leave their masters on merely making an agreement to that effect. (S. 24. 33.) Mohammed also provided that sums should be advanced to the slaves from Public Treasury (Bait-ul mâl) to purchase their liberty. (S. 9. 60.)

They were to be set free as a penalty for culpable homicide not amounting to murder (S. 4. 92.), or as an expiation for wrongfully divorcing a wife (S. 58. 3.), or for a mistaken word in an oath (S. 5. 89.)

But Mohammed struck the hammer deep down the root when he shut the only way by which God's free men were turned into men's captives, namely, by a positive enactment that henceforth no war-prisoners should be reduced to slavery—they must be granted liberty, either freely or for ransom. I give the words of the Koran:

When ye encounter those who believe not, strike off (their) necks until ye have overpowered them, and (of the rest) bind fast the bonds; then either (give them) a free dismissal afterwards, or (exact) a ransom, until the war shall have laid down its burdens. (S. 47. 4.)

Who will yet say Mohammed did nothing to abolish slavery? But humanity will bless his later followers for honouring the Prophet's injunction in its breach.

true. The domestic slavery of the Mohamedans is no doubt indefensible, but what is this compared to the cruelty and horrors of the African slave-trade, and the plantations of the West Indies? We hear enough in all concience of Popes of Rome, and Archbishops of Canterbury, of councils and convocations, of bulls, articles, canons and concordats; but when did we ever hear of any public act of these men against this horrible traffic? Shew me the bull, shew me the canon or act of convocation. The Bishops of Rome and Canterbury themselves deserve the epithet of *panders to the base passions of their followers*, which they give to Mohamed, for not having, when the atrocity of this traffic was clearly proved, excommunicated all those engaged in carrying it on, as was done by the Quakers.

89. I am aware that they may make a plausible defence, by alleging that they cannot excommunicate a man for the fact of being the owner of slaves, because the legality of slavery is admitted

in almost every page of the gospels and epistles; as wherever the word *servus* or is found and translated servant, the word used ought to be *slave*—the word *servus* literally meaning a person bought or sold in a market; the freedman answering to our hired servant. But if domestic slavery be unfortunately allowed to Christians, it by no means follows that the African slave-trade is allowed, the horrors of which could never have been suspected by the ancients, and which in every respect differs from their domestic slavery.

90. Although the prophet did not, as he ought to have done, abolish that horrid custom, he did not leave it altogether unnoticed; but in declaring that all Mohamedans are brothers, and that no man should hold his brother in slavery, he at once liberated a vast mass of mankind. The moment a slave declares himself a believer he is free. Although Mohamed did not in this go so far as he ought to have done, yet he did something, and that was better

than nothing; and while it has probably induced some to avow themselves proselytes without conviction, (on which account it will be reprobated and attributed to a bad motive by the pious Christian, whose zeal is warmed by a live coal from off the altar,) yet it has saved from misery millions upon millions. Another modification of slavery, or alleviation of its evils, is to be found in the ordinance, that in the sale of slaves the mother shall on no account be separated from the children, a crime committed by our West-Indians every day. I have not observed any ordinance of this kind in the gospels, therefore Mohamed did not copy it from them.

91. We make many professions of a wish to convert the poor Negroes; I advise our missionary societies to use their enormous wealth in giving the Negroes their freedom as soon as converted, declaring them brothers, after the example of the Mohamedans. I can assure them that this will make more proselytes than all their sermons.

92. The Westminster Review says, "His law of slavery is, 'If slaves come to you, you shall'—not imprison and then sell by public sale, though no claimant appears, as in the nineteenth century is the law of Christian England in her provinces, but—'redeem them, and it is forbidden to you to send them forth.'¹ And this was a man standing up in the wilds of Arabia in the seventh century."²

93. Mohamed says, "Unto such of your slaves as desire[a written instrument allowing them to redeem themselves on paying a certain sum, write one; and if ye know good in them, give them of the riches of God which he hath given you."³ I have not found this in the gospels.

94. The Spaniards, even the avaricious Spaniards, have acted upon a similar plan with regard to their slaves in Cuba, by allowing them gradually to redeem themselves.

¹ Koran, ii. p. 85. ² West. Rev. No. IX. p. 221.

³ Collier, Lec. ix. p. 365; Koran, Vol. II. ch. xxiv. p. 186.

Miracles

95. It has been already observed that Mohamed never pretended to the power of working miracles, but totally denied from the beginning any supernatural endowment of this kind. His miracle-loving followers only allow him to have had revelations from heaven, and in the Koran the working of miracles is repeatedly disclaimed.

96. When the natural propensity of mankind to the marvellous is considered, it is no way surprising that Mohamedan devotees should have been desirous of discovering miracles in the actions of their prophet to raise him, as they imagined, in the estimation of mankind. Thus, out of his dream of the journey to heaven on the flash of lightning, they would make a real journey. But in general the pretended miracles have been of that nature which at the same time proves the sincerity of the devotees and their real occurrence. Thus, when he was hid in a cave for three days a turtle dove laid her two eggs in a

tree at its mouth. Again, a spider spun her web in the entrance, and from observing these circumstances, his pursuers were persuaded that he was not in the cave, and thus he escaped. I suspect the college of cardinals would have found out some more miraculous miracles in order to account for the escape of a Romish saint; but perhaps the miracle of a spider spinning a web, and of a dove laying eggs, may be more to the taste of the philosopher.

97. Dr. Lee, of Cambridge, in his work entitled, Controversial Tracts relating to Christianity and Mahomedism, has given us an argument of the Mohamedans which is extremely curious, and furnishes grounds for much reflection. I have before seen it put into the form of a mathematical problem; I pretend not to solve it, but leave it to the mathematicians of the Doctor's Alma Mater; it is an argument which requires deep consideration.

98. Mohamedans say, "As evidence of Christian miracles is daily becoming

weaker, a time must at last arrive when it will fail of affording assurance that they were miracles at all: whence would arise the necessity of another prophet and other miracles" ¹ ▪ We do not shew our wisdom in despising the people who could discover such an argument.

Bigotry and Intolerance

99. Nothing is so common as to hear the Christian priests abuse the religion of Mohamed for its bigotry and intolerance. Wonderful assurance and hypocrisy! Who was it expelled the Moriscoes from Spain because they would not turn Christians? Who was it murdered the millions of Mexico and Peru, and gave them all away as slaves because they were not Christians? What a contrast have the Mohamedans exhibited in Greece! For many centuries the Christians have

¹ Contr. Tracts Christ. and Mahom., by Lee, p. 13.

▪ Not "the necessity of another prophet and other miracles" so much as the utter historical *unimportance* of this class of prophets and this set of miracles.

been permitted to live in the peaceable possession of their properties, their religion, their priests, bishops, patriarchs, and churches; and at the present moment the war between the Greeks and Turks is no more waged on account of religion, than was the late war between the Negroes in Demerara and the English. The Greeks and the Negroes want to throw off the yoke of their conquerors, and they are both justified in so doing. Wherever the Caliphs conquered, if the inhabitants turned Mohamedans, they were instantly on a footing of perfect equality with their conquerors. An ingenious and learned Dissenter, speaking of the Saracens, says, "They persecuted nobody; Jews and Christians all lived happy among them."¹

100. But though we are told that the Moriscoes were banished because they would not turn Christians, I suspect there was another cause; I suspect they, by their arguments, so gained upon the

¹ Robinson's Ecc. Res. p. 113.

Christians, that the ignorant monks thought that the only way their arguments could be answered was by the Inquisition and the sword; and I have no doubt they were right as far as THEIR wretched powers of answering them extended. In the countries conquered by the Caliphs, the peaceable inhabitants, whether Greeks, Persians, Sabeans, or Hindoos, were not put to the sword as the Christians have represented, but after the conquest was terminated, were left in the peaceable possession of their properties and religion, paying a tax for the enjoyment of this latter privilege, so trifling as to be an oppression to none.* In all the history of the Caliphs, there cannot be shewn any thing half

* It is wrongly stated of the Mohammedan 'jizyah' (capitation-tax) that it was *in lieu* of the free enjoyment of religion by the non-Moslem population. This is by no means true. The tax was levied on the *Dhimmi* population by virtue of the treaty or agreement by which their rights and obligations were clearly defined by the Moslem State. One of the terms being that no military service should be required of them, and that they should enjoy perfect freedom in the exercise of their reli-

so infamous as the Inquisition, nor a single instance of an individual burnt for his religious opinion; nor, do I believe, put to death in a time of peace for simply not embracing the religion of Islam. No doubt the later Mohamedan conquerors in their expeditions have been guilty of great cruelties; these, Christian authors have sedulously laid to the charge of their religion; but this is not just. Assuredly, religious bigotry increased the evils of war, but in this the Mohamedan conquerors were not worse than the Christians. But the sword once sheathed, there was an end of persecution. The Koran says, "If the Lord had pleased, all who are in the earth would have believed together; and wilt *thou* force men to be believers? No man can believe but by the permission of God; and HE will pour out his indignation on those who will not understand." ¹

Koran, ii. 257.

gions, and that the Moslems should see that they are not put to any disability in the State on account of their religion. (*Cf.* my *Gharibu'l-Qur'an*, pp. 29, 30.)

101. Again, "Let there be no forcing in religion; the right way has been made clearly apparent from the wrong."¹

102. Again, "Fight in the way of God with them that fight with *you*; but be not the *aggressors*, for God loveth not the aggressors. And kill them wherever you find them,^a and drive them from whence they drove *you*.^b *But if they give over, (be mindful that) God is forgiving and merciful.*"

103. "But if they give over, then no hostility, except against the treacherous."² Is this being "cursed with a religion which inculcates intolerance"? ³ Read the account of Moses and the Canaanites; of Samuel, Agag, and the Gibeonites; and

¹ Koran, x. 98. ² Koran, ii. 191, et seq.

³ Rev. No. LXXXV. art. 5.

^a Whether in or out of the Sacred Mosque, mentioned in the verse.

^b I give the portion of the verse omitted by the author. It runs: "for mischief-making is worse than slaughter; yet fight not with them by the Sacred Mosque until they fight with you therein; but if they fight, then kill them; thus the reward of the ungodly."

then compare the two.*

104. I request the impartial reader, if such a person can to found, be meditate upon the religious wars of the Christian sects, which have scarcely ever ceased for the last eighteen hundred years, and compare them with the differences which have prevailed between the followers of Omar and Ali, the two great sects among the Musselmen. I call them differences, for they can hardly in any case be said to have proceeded to the extent of actual warfare; and in no case can an instance be produced of a victim at the stake. I do not deny that the evil passions of hatred and bigotry exist among Mohamedans; but Mohamed is no more to be charged with this, than Jesus is to be charged with the hatred of the Irish Brunswickers to the Papists.

* Cf. the Bible, Exod. 22. 20; 32. 27-9, 35; Deut. 13. 1, 2, 5-10, 14, 15; 17. 2-5; 18. 20; Lev. 24. 10-14, 16, 23; Josh. 6. 17, 21; 8. 26; 10. 28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 37, 39, 40; 11. 11, 12, 14, 15, 21; 2 Kings 9. 1-8; 10. 10, 11, 16-30; 1 Kings 21. 17-24.

105. It is a very great mistake to suppose that the Mohamedan religion was propagated by the sword alone.^a Mr. Sale has been generally considered to be well-informed on this subject, and he cannot be supposed to have had any unfair partiality to Mohamedanism—he was strictly a Trinitarian Christian—and what does he say? “I shall not here inquire into the reasons why the law of Mohammed has met with so unexampled a reception in the world, (for they are greatly deceived who imagine it to have been propagated by the sword alone,) or by what means it came to be embraced by nations which never felt the force of the Mohamedan arms; and even by those which stripped the Arabians of their conquests, and put an end to the sovereignty and very being of their Califs: *yet it seems as if there was something more than what is vulgarly imagined in a religion which*

^a On this subject, see Sir T. W. Arnold's *Preaching of Islam*; Constable, London.

has made so surprising a progress." He then goes on to say, he conceives an impartial version of the Koran to be necessary in order to expose the IMPOSTURE.¹ The word *imposture* shews, that this evidence in favour of the religion of Mohamed is that of an unwilling witness.

106. Mr. Gibbon says, "But the millions of African and Asiatic converts who swelled the native band of the faithful Arabs, must have been allured, rather than constrained, to declare their belief in one God and the apostle of God. By the repetition of a sentence or the loss of a foreskin, the subject or the slave, the captive or the criminal, arose in a moment the free and equal companion of the victorious Moslems. Every sin was expiated, every engagement was dissolved; the vow of celibacy was superseded by the indulgence of nature; the active spirits who slept in the cloister were awakened by the

¹ P. 4.

trumpet of the Saracens; and in the convulsion of the world, every member of a new society ascended to the natural level of his capacity and courage."¹

107. The first attack, or one of the first attacks, of the Turks on the Saracens, took place in the latter end of the eighth century. They came from the North betwixt the Caspian and Black seas, and were not then of the Mohamedan religion. But they soon afterward came over to the religion of the conquered Saracens.²

108. In this conversion of their conquerors, a most remarkable and pointed refutation is given to the often-repeated charge, that Islamism was indebted to the sword for its success. For here is a grand proof that Islamism not only converted those whom it conquered, but also those who conquered its adherents: it converted its conquerors.

109. The excessively bigoted character of the modern Mohamedans may, in a great measure, be attributed to the at-

¹ Vol. V. ch. li. p. 382.

² Vide Recaut's History of the Popes, p. 139.

tacks made upon them by the Christian orders of Knighthood, the Crusaders, &c., and by the intolerant spirit of the orthodox Christianity, which in its turn produces intolerance. For though the Mohamedans do not refuse a place in paradise to the orthodox Christians, the latter condemn all the former without compunction or exception.¹ And though this is the doctrine neither of Mark nor of Jesus, it is the doctrine taught to our soldiers and sailors, into whose hands our faulty translations are put, and who believe the plain English which they find there. And it is also the doctrine of nine-tenths of the Romish and Protestant missionaries.²

110. I know well that Christians are apt to look down with sovereign contempt upon Mohamedans, and upon every thing relating to them and their religion; but let them inquire, and they will find that the Mohamedans were, soon after the establishment of their

¹ Mark, ch. xvi. 16.

² Vide Athanasian Creed.

religion, the most liberal and enlightened race on the earth; that we are more indebted to them for useful learning than even to the ancients; that their religion abounds with precepts of benevolence and sound morality; and that it is no more just to charge it with the crimes of the ignorant bigots which now disgrace it, than it is to charge the Christian religion with the similar crimes of some of its priests and professors.

Intellectual Achievements of Mohammedans

III. Europeans are very vain of their present superiority over the Mohammedans in science, arts, and arms; and to hear them talk, a person might be induced to suspect, that in no former age had any nations ever risen to any eminence in these elegant and useful acquirements. But in this he would be much deceived. Except, perhaps, in some branches of experimental philosophy and manufactures, there was no branch of art or science which was not almost in as great perfection among the subjects of the Caliphs as they now are in Great Britain.

112. Mr. Richardson, whose authority no one upon this subject will question, says, "In the eighth, ninth, and succeeding centuries, when the European world was clouded with barbarity and ignorance, when sovereign princes and great feudal lords could neither read nor write, the Arabians rivalled the Romans of the Augustan age in erudition and genius: whilst with a more extensive empire, they excelled them in magnificence, and the more refined splendour and elegance of life. The Kalifs Al Modhi, Al Rashid, Al Mahmoun, and other monarchs of the illustrious house of Al Abbas, were men of learning, genius, and politeness. Learning and genius were found, therefore, the surest avenues to royal favour; they were, of consequence, universally cultivated; princes, generals, and viziers, being not only magnificent patrons of literary merit, but holding themselves a conspicuous rank among writers of the most distinguished class." Upon this Mr. Maurice observes, "that zeal for the encouragement of learning, which animated the

Arabian princes, continued to glow with almost equal fervour in the breasts of the Tartar monarchs, their conquerors and successors.”¹

II3. Many Christians will be surprised to learn that the Koran has been cursed or blessed with probably full as many commentators as the gospels, which is proved by thousands and tens of thousands of them yet existing; they are supposed to exceed forty thousand.

II4. Sir W. Jones, in his second dissertation on the literature of Asia, observes, “that the Mohamedans are expressly commanded by their lawgiver to search for learning even in the remotest parts of the globe.”^a I think Mohamed did not copy this from the gospels, nor from the Romish canons, which prohibit the study of heathen literature.

II5. So far are the followers of Mohamed from believing that he prohibited

¹ Maurice, Hist. Hind. Vol. I. p. 10, 4to

^a In the words of Mohammed: “Seek knowledge, although it be in China.”

learning, or from wishing to prohibit it themselves, that one of the sayings which they preserve of him by tradition is, that "the ink of the learned is as good as the blood of the martyrs;" and it is presented to this day to the Moslem school-boy for a copy, in the place of the "Industry is praised" of our domestic calligraphists.¹

116. The Christians have made a great outcry against all the followers of Mohammed on account of the destruction of the library at Alexandria, the act of *one* savage barbarian, a disgrace to his religion and the literary character of his Arabian countrymen, *if, indeed, he did burn it*; but they carefully keep out of sight the circumstance that part of the celebrated library of the Ptolemies was burnt in one of the battles of Cæsar, and that another part, if not all the remainder, was burnt by a decree of the Christian Theodosius, when he burnt and destroyed throughout his dominions the temples of the heathens for glory of God.

¹ West. Rev. No. IX. p. 222.

117. No doubt these pious acts of legitimacy of both the Christians and Mohamedans had considerable effect in producing the darkness of the succeeding ages, but there were two or three other causes much more effectual. The acts of the barbarian Omar ^a only extended to one city and one moment of time; but the repeated decrees of the Roman Christian emperors for the destruction of books of both heretics and philosophers, and the canons of the Councils and Popes of Rome, and the denunciations of the fathers of the church against the wickedness of reading the books of the Heathen, were, I have no doubt, much more effectual. They extended to the whole world. Add to this, the universal practice of the monks and nuns, for a thousand years together, of collecting manuscripts into their monasteries, for the purpose of erasing from them the works of the wicked Heathen, to write their contemptible breviaries and legends upon them, and

there will be no necessity to seek for any other cause for the scarcity of manuscripts. For several centuries the art of manufacturing vellum or skin for parchment appears, in many countries, to have been lost, and consequently the price of it became very high. The Christians boast much of the preservation of manuscripts in their monasteries. But they never tell us for what purpose they were preserved. How absurd to believe that the ignorant, bigoted monks would wish to preserve the literature of the Heathens directly in opposition to the canons of their church, by which they were forbidden to read them! On the revival of letters, no doubt, many learned priests exerted themselves to preserve the literature of the ancients which was deposited in the convents, and so far the preservation appears to have been a piece of good fortune. But this was done by enlightened individuals in defiance of the decrees of emperors and the canons of councils; decrees and canons the existence of which cannot

for a moment be doubted; but the burning of the library by Omar, Mr. Gibbon has shewn by very strong arguments is extremely doubtful. I must fairly say, for my own part,¹ founding my opinion on the arguments used by Mr. Gibbon, I do not believe it. It is nothing but a Christian calumny, to blacken the religion of the impostor.

118. At the time when Christian Europe was involved in ignorance and darkness, as I have just now stated, the Mohamedan empire of the Caliphs flourished in a high state of refinement and civilization. Arts, sciences, and literature, were carried to a very great degree of perfection: and thus it continued for many centuries, till it was overturned by the then ignorant and barbarous hordes of Turks (who had nothing in common with the polished and enlightened Arabs), barbarians who have equally destroyed the ancient monuments of the Greeks and of the Caliphs, and have almost

¹ Vide Gibbon, Vol. V. chap. li. p. 343. 4to.

reduced the finest parts of the world to a desert. Thus it must not be supposed that darkness and ignorance are necessary appendages of Mohamedanism; of Turkish barbarism they are; but the history of the Caliphs proves that they are not so of Mohamedanism. But bad as the Turks are, the remains of the Greek nation prove, that they are more humane than the Christian barbarians who extirpated the Moriscoes of Spain.

119. It is a well-known fact, that the enlightened emperor Akber, great grandfather to Aurengzebe, dispatched an embassy, in the year 1595, to the king of Portugal, to request that missionaries might be sent to instruct him in the Christian religion, in order that, after he had carefully inquired, he might choose the religion which appeared to him to be the true one. Three Jesuits of high character were sent. When they arrived at Agra they were very kindly received, and had a church built for them, at the charge of the Mogul, with many privileges and immunities, all which

were continued to them by the successor of Akber, Jehan Guire, in 1604. The Jesuits published two works for the use of the Emperor and the Musselmen, which were answered by a Persian nobleman named Ahmed Ebn Zin Alabedin. It is very evident that the followers of the prophet obtained as decided a victory by their pens, as they had previously done by their arms. Prideaux cannot conceal his chagrin.

120. He says that the work of the Jesuits *unluckily* (and why *unluckily*?) fell into the hands of this learned Persian, who, to use his words "*made terrible work with the Jesuits.*" The priests not liking "*this terrible work,*" by orders of the pope and the college de propaganda fide at Rome, a learned friar undertook to answer it. But this still not being satisfactory, another learned man was chosen, whose work was translated into Arabic and sent into Asia, but this, Prideaux says, did "*by no means answer the design.*" How unfortunate that they did not send to Norwich! I wonder whether the

learned Dean would have succeeded better than the Pope, the College, and the Jesuits.¹

121. This whole story is very remarkable. Where among Christian shall we meet with an example of liberality equal to this of the Mogul? In this instance, as well as many others, the Mohamedans have shewn that they were not afraid of subjecting their religion to fair examination; and it does not appear that they first *tied up the hands of their opponents by declaring, that they must not deny its truth, for to deny its truth was to revile it*, thereby preventing every thing like fair and free discussion.

122. The exertions of the missionaries of the Christians, though evidently allowed the greatest latitude, do not appear to have had any great success. I have some doubt as to what would happen even in this *enlightened* age, as it calls itself, if the Grand Seignior was

¹Dow's preface to his translation of Ferishta, Vol. I. p. 26; Maurice, Ind. Ant. Vol. IV. p. 410; L'rideaux, Life of Mah., p. 238.

to send (as our missionaries did a Mr. Drummond to Geneva, to teach their peculiar doctrines) one of the richest of his muftis to build a mosque, and to preach the doctrines of the Koran in the centre of London. I suspect a well-grounded fear that this would cause a renewal, under the auspices of the priests, of the fires of the year eighty, or of those of more recent date at Birmingham, would cause our ministers to answer him by the mouth of one of our admirals, who might entertain an opinion that it was possible to bombard Constantinople.

123. The Christians would do well to recollect, that the doctrines of Mohamed created a degree of enthusiasm in his followers which is to be sought in vain in the immediate followers of Jesus, and that his religion spread with a rapidity unexampled in that of the Christians. In less than half a century it became triumphant in many great and flourishing empires. When Jesus was led to the cross, his followers fled, their enthusiasm

forsook them, they left him to perish; and if they were forbidden to defend him, they might have remained to comfort him, patiently setting at defiance his and their persecutors. The followers of Mohamed, on the contrary, rallied round their persecuted prophet, and, risking their lives in his defence, made him triumph over all his enemies.

124. It is worthy of observation that the religion of Mohamed did not take its rise in an age of religious darkness, but, on the contrary, after the Christian religion had existed a light to enlighten the Gentiles for six hundred years. To this it is replied, that the Christian religion had become much corrupted, so that it could be no longer said to enlighten the world. It seems odd that it should have failed in the object for which it was sent. However, this is the very argument used by the prophet, and one which, no doubt, had great weight with his followers. He said that another prophet or messenger of God had become absolutely necessary to reform the vices

of the followers of Jesus, and the corruptions of his religion: and that this argument was specious and plausible cannot surely be denied.

125. The seventh century swarmed with Christian authors; it seems very remarkable that not one of them was bold enough to take up the pen to refute, during his life-time, or the lives of the first Caliphs, the doctrines of the prophet of Arabia. And I believe we have not a single work of the seventh century in refutation of the Mohamedan doctrines.

126. The learned and Rev. Professor of Oxford says, 'No representation can convey stronger ideas of the melancholy state of religion in the seventh century, than the description of the character of a good Christian as drawn at that period by St. Eligius, or Eloi, Bishop of Noyon.'

127. "Bonus Christianus est qui ad ecclesiam frequenter venit, et oblationem, quæ in altari Deo offeratur, exhibet; qui de fructibus suis non gustat, nisi

prius Deo aliquid offerat: qui quoties sanctæ solemnitates adveniunt, ante dies plures castitatem etiam cum propria uxore custodit, ut secura conscientia Domini altare accedere possit; qui postremo symbolum, vel orationem dominicam memoriter tenet. Redimite animas vestras de pœna dum habetis in potestate remedia; oblationes et decimas ecclesiis afferte; luminaria sanctis locis, juxta quod habetis, exhibete: ad ecclesiam, quoque, frequenter convenite; sanctorum patrocinia humiliter expetite: quod si observaveritis, securi in die judicii ante tribunal æterni judicis venientes, dicetis, DA, DOMINE, QUIA DEDIMUS.''¹

128. A most correct and delightful description of a good priest-made Christian, no doubt, as well in the nineteenth as in the seventh century! For the religions of priests are substantially the same in the nineteenth as in the seventh. The only difference is this, that in the latter a larger dose of priestly medicine

¹ Mosh. Vol. II; White's Notes, p. vii.

was usually administered for the cure of the Christian's diseased soul than is in the former. It is the same in the Romish and Protestant Churches at this time: from the peculiar education of the follower of the Pope, his stomach is stronger than that of the Protestant, and he takes and probably requires rather a stronger dose. The skill of the priestly doctor consists in correctly estimating the strength of his patient; he compounds his medicine as well as he can to suit each respective case; the former takes rather a stronger dose than the latter, and that is all the difference. One takes a dose called transubstantiation, the other a dose called the Athanasian Creed, and both of them take the following which the bishop utters in the ordination of a priest: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the church of God, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands. *Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.*"

129. But, to the credit of the Romish Church, it is right to state that to this they annex a condition. It is no excuse for Protestants to say that in another part of their rites they repeat this with a condition. It is here given absolutely.

130. It is scarcely possible to conceive any crimes or misconduct of Mohamed too great to deprive him of the right of pardon, when a person considers the anxiety displayed by him to abolish priests and monks. The declaration that he would have no monks in his religion is above all praise; and the absence of a hired priesthood placed his religion in practical effect for many generations far above all others. The high state of civilization and polite literature to which the magnificent empires of the caliphs arose, may probably be attributed to this circumstance. Some reason there must be for this state of things, so different from the state of the kingdoms under the priest-ridden and monk-ridden Christians in the middle ages. There is none more probable than this, for most as-

suredly the ignorance and darkness of Europe were caused by the priests, as is abundantly proved by the numerous decrees of popes and councils against learning, finishing with the last unavailing effort of the celebrated Council of Trent. In reply to this, solitary examples will be produced of learned monks and priests, but these availed nothing for many centuries against the general policy of THE CHURCH. As little avail a few solitary instances producable to prove any thing against the general policy and practice, as avails the present example of many British and Irish bishops and priests to prove that a hired priesthood has not, in all ages, from the extremest boundary of China to John-a-Grot's house in Scotland, been the greatest evil to mankind, of all the evils which have ever afflicted them.

131. Religions have been accused by some philosophers of having the effect of working the degradation of mankind; and, indeed, when the state to which devotees or ultra-pious persons of many

countries—the Hindoos, Spaniards, Portuguese, &c., &c.—are reduced, is considered, the charge at first seems to be but too well founded. This effect, however, has not been produced by *religion*, but by its *corruptions*; and the heaviest part of the charge which I bring against priests is, that, instead of endeavouring to prevent corruptions, or to correct them from time to time as they arise, they have almost always exerted their influence to increase them, till they at last become intolerable.

132. A most estimable Unitarian priest, a friend of the author's, has said, that soldiers have been a greater evil than priests. I say, no. Soldiers are the effects of the turbulent passions of mankind, priests are the causes of them. I desire my reader to look in Portugal, to look in Spain, and finally, to look at home in Ireland, and tremble.¹

133. These declarations will probably raise against the writer the cry of

¹ Written in 1828.

Atheism. He fears it not, nor its authors. The religion of the incomparable Jesus, (the Nazarite, Gr. *Iésous Nazorios*, not *Nazarynos*, of the city of Nazareth, was, in a most peculiar manner, the poor man's religion. It was the religion of the heart; it required neither creeds, altars, nor sacrifices; and if there was one thing more odious to its Founder than another, it was the cant and hypocrisy of Scribes, Pharisees, and PRIESTS. Priests and chief priests actually stank beneath his nostrils, and Mohamed, in abolishing them, proved himself a better Gospel Christian than we have ever seen since.

Sincerity of Mohammed

134. The Westminster Reviewer justly observes, "The man who could take ablutions and fasting, and leave alone great and small tithes, must have had no inconsiderable degree of singleness of eye and honesty of purpose."

135. His description of pure religion is the religion of Jesus himself. He says,

136. "Religion is not turning your faces to the East or to the West; but the religious are they who believe in God and the last day, and give their wealth out of love to their kindred, and to orphans, and to the poor, and to the wayfaring man, and to those who ask charity, and for the redeeming of captives; and who perform their prayers, and give alms, and who keep their engagements when they have made them; and the patient under misfortunes and afflictions, and in the time of adversity. These are they who are in possession of the truth; and these, they are the pious."¹

¹ Koran, ii. 178.

* I give the literal translation:

It is no good that ye turn your face [in prayer] towards the east and the west, but goodness is of him who believes in God, and the last day, and the angels, and the book, and the prophets; and who gives wealth, for His love, to those who are of kin, and to orphans, and the poor, and the homeless, and those who ask, and for the necks (under a yoke); and who is steadfast in prayer, and gives alms;

137. "If you make your alms to appear, it is well; *but if ye conceal them,* and give them to the poor, this will be better for you."¹

138. Mr. Sale has pointed out a circumstance which took place in the twelfth year of Mohamed's mission, which seems in a high degree honourable to him, and serves in some measure as an exposition of his principles. He says, "In this year, called by the Mahometans the accepted year, twelve men of Yatreb, or Medina, of whom ten were of the tribe of Khazri, and the other that of Aws, came to Mecca, and took an oath of fidelity to Mahomet at Al Acaba, a hill on the north of that city. This oath was called the women's oath; not that any women were present at this time, but because

¹ Ibid. ii. 272.

and of those who fulfil their covenant when they covenant, and those who persevere patiently in prosperity and adversity, and in time of violence;—these are they who are true, and these are the pious."

a man was not thereby obliged to take up arms in defence of Mahomet or his religion; it being the same oath that was afterward exacted of the women, the form of which we have in the Koran, and is to this effect; viz. That they should renounce all idolatry; and they should not steal, nor commit fornication, nor kill their children, (as the Pagan Arabs used to do when they apprehended they should not be able to maintain them,) nor forge calumnies; and that they should obey the prophet in all things that were reasonable."¹

139. This oath cannot fail to remind the reader of that taken by the early Christians, described by Pliny in his letter to the Emperor Trajan; which has always been considered so honourable to them.

140. I conceive that the opinion which the great Napoleon entertained of Mohamed must be interesting; and I cannot resist the pleasure of record-

¹ Preface, p. lxii.

ing it, as it not only in some measure agrees with what I thought, but with what I had written, before I saw it. I know not the authority for the date of the Koran which Napoleon seems to speak of as an acknowledged, well-known fact. "The Emperor adverting to the truth of history, expressed his disbelief of all that was attributed to Mahomet. 'He must, doubtless, have been like all chiefs of sects,' said he. 'The Koran, having been written thirty years after his death, may have recorded many falsehoods. The empire of the Prophet, his doctrine and his mission, being established and fulfilled, people might and must have spoken accordingly. Still it remains to be explained how the mighty event, which we are certain did take place, namely, the conquest of the world, could have been effected in the short space of fifty or sixty years. By whom was it brought about? By the hordes of the desert, who, as we are informed, were few in number, ignorant, unwarlike, undisciplined, and destitute of

system. And yet they opposed the civilized world, abounding in resources. Fanaticism could not have accomplished this miracle, for fanaticism must have time to establish her dominion, and the career of Mahomet lasted only thirteen years.''¹

141. But fanaticism did accomplish it, and to nothing but fanaticism can it be attributed; at least, without fanaticism it could not have taken place.

142. Christians completely blinded, by their prejudices, to the truth respecting their religion, and the state in which it was, and the circumstances in which the world was placed in the beginning of the seventh century, are surprised at the rapid progress both of Mohamedism and the empire which accompanied it. The confusion and extraordinary state of uncertainty into which Christianity at that time had fallen are almost incredible, particularly in the East, where the rising despotism of the

¹ Las Casas' Journal, Vol. II. Part iii. p. 81.

Roman Pontiff had not yet taken effect in crushing down into one mass the almost innumerable sects, with their almost innumerable sacred and inspired writings, as they considered them,—gospels, revelations, acts, epistles, &c. No two sects agreed in any thing except in mutual hatred, and in persecuting their opponents when they had the power.

143. When this extraordinary, disorganized state of Christianity is considered, it does not seem wonderful that a religion should succeed which promised to put an end to the confusion which prevailed, and by its extreme simplicity seemed upon the plain sound principles of reason and common sense likely to unite all parties within its pale. Speaking of the state of Christianity at this time, the learned lecturer of Oxford says, “Divided into numberless parties, on account of distinctions the most trifling and absurd, contesting with each other from perverseness, and persecuting each other with rancour, corrupt in opinion, and degenerate in practice, the Christians

of this unhappy period seem to have retained little more than the name and external profession of their religion. Of a Christian church scarce any vestige remained. The most profligate principles and absurd opinions were universally predominant; ignorance amidst the most favourable opportunities of knowledge; vice amidst the noblest encouragements to virtue: a pretended zeal for truth, mixed with the wildest extravagancies of error; an implacable spirit of discord about opinions which none could settle; and a general and striking similarity in the commission of crimes, which it was the duty and interest of all to avoid."

144. Again he says, "The images of the saints who had laboured to disseminate, and the bones of the martyrs who had died to confirm, the faith, were now, by the arts of a designing priesthood, and the ignorance of a superstitious multitude, held up as proper objects of religious adoration."

¹ Sermon II.

² Ibid.

145. Again he says, "The blind fury of superstitious zeal extinguished the tenderest sentiments of nature; the majesty of the laws was trampled on and violated with impunity: the cities of the East were deluged with blood."¹

146. The account given by Dr. White is very just, but can any thing be more shocking? It is not surprising that any religion should succeed which promised to put an end to such a state of misery.

147. Dr. White, in the following passage, gives us some of the reasons urged by Mohamed or his followers. They are very striking; and, coming from the learned and reverend Professor, I hope will not be disputed.

148. Dr. White says, "Mohamed alleged, with much plausibility, that God had originally given one grand and universal religion to all the sons of men; that when the cares and avocations of life had obliterated, or the frailty or perverseness of human nature had corrupt-

¹ Ibid.

ed this faith, it had pleased the Almighty in his mercy to send forth successive prophets, to instruct and to reform mankind, ever prone to wander from the plain and simple paths of truth. Such was Moses, whose mission was, by the particular designation of Providence, confined within the narrow limits of one people. Such, too, was Jesus ; whose more liberal and comprehensive system, proceeding from a fuller and more perfect exertion of Divine goodness, was destined to confer its benefits, without distinction, on all the widely-extended race of mankind : since time, however, had unhappily corrupted the doctrines of Christianity itself, and left men once more to wander in darkness and in error, it had at length pleased the Almighty to elect him, as the instrument of his gracious designs; to commission him to rescue religion from the corruptions which obscured its native splendour by making him the last great restorer of truth and virtue to the world." ¹

¹ White's fourth Sermon, p. 179.

149. And surely some one to reform the religion and rescue it from its corruptions was manifestly very much wanting, and the fact admitted by Mohamed of the truth of both Judaism and Christianity, was very likely to draw vast numbers of believers in both into his pale. Though he admitted the truth of Christianity, he maintained that it had become excessively corrupt. In his vision he is made to represent, that Adam, Noah, Moses, &c., begged him to intercede with God for them; but that when he arrived in the last heaven, and met with Jesus Christ, his style changed, and he begged Jesus Christ to intercede for him—thus giving to Jesus the precedence;^b so that

^a I should here specially mention that Mohammed never claimed to be the last of the prophets, nor taught the finality of his own dispensation. See my chapter on Islam.

^b This is, like many of the same nature, from a piece of fabricated lie published in the name of Mohammed. Mohammed had a very high esteem for the character of Jesus, as he took him; but he never believed in the doctrine of His Divinity, His Sonship (being a complement of the Trinity), the Original Sin in man, the Atonement, the Intercession—later inventions in the name of Jesus to

it is evident from this and many other passages in the Koran, that every Unitarian Christian, as well as some of those of other sects, might very consistently become Mohamedans. He reminded the Christians that Jesus had promised to send them a comforter, and it really required no unusual or extraordinary degree of enthusiasm in him to believe himself this person, or to convince others that he was so.

150. The Koran constantly bears testimony to the divine mission of Jesus, calling him the Messiah; Jesus, the son of Mary; the sent of God; and his word which he conveyed unto Mary; and a breath (emanation) from him:¹ and insists on the miraculous circumstances of his birth, in the same identical terms as the Christian Evangelists.²

¹ Koran, iv. 169

² Ibid. xix. 20.

bring God down from His Sacred Eminence into the pantheons of heathenism. See also my *New Life of Jesus*.

* This is not a fact. The Koran has its own way of telling stories, which it does by giving

151. In the following extract I perfectly accord with Mons. Constant's description of the early ages of Mohamedism : "Nous dirons plus : dans le cours de nos recherches, un fait nous a frappé, un fait qui s'est répété plus d'une fois dans l'histoire. Les religions constituées, travaillées, exploitées par les hommes, ont fait souvent du mal. Toutes les crises religieuses ont fait du bien. Voyez l'Arabe ; brigand sans pitié, assassin sans remords, époux impitoyable, père dénaturé, l'Arabe n'était qu'un animal féroce. On peut consulter sur ses anciens mœurs les observations critiques de Sale, à la tête de sa traduction du Coran. Les Arabes, avant Mahomet, considéraient les femmes comme un propriété. Ils les traitaient en esclaves. Ils enterraient leurs filles vivantes. Le prophète paraît, et deux siècles d'héroïsme, de générosité, de dévouement, deux siècles,

them a turn and quietly improving upon them so as to make them perfectly historical when the time is ripe for historical criticism. In not one story is any mention made of miraculous circumstances. In this connexion, see Appendix; also my *Stories from the Koran*, Introd.

égaux sous plus d'un rapport aux plus belles époques de la Grèce et de Rome, laissent dans les annales du monde une trace brillante. Nous avons à dessein cité l'Islamisme, de toutes les religions modernes, la plus stationnaire, et par la même, aujourd'hui la plus défectueuse et la plus nuisible."

152. When the Christian priests maintain that the doctrine of Mohamed was indebted solely to the sword for its success, they evidently put the cause for the effect. The sword is of no value without a hand to use it; and it was the enthusiasm of the persons who used it which gave them the victory; and this enthusiasm was produced by a lively faith in the truth of Mohamed's doctrine. Paradise, instant and future happiness, and that for ever, was believed to be the lot of the true believer who fell in the cause of the one only God, and in defence of his prophet. How absurd, and unprofitable too, it was, then, not to brave all dangers, secure the glorious reward, and enhance the merit by the

utility of their exertions in the cause; particularly when it was known that the final, inevitable lot of every man was fixed, predestinated before the creation of the world, which nothing could prevent or delay! In the bed or in the field, a man *must* die in the manner predestined. No care, no danger, could change the inevitable decree. The contagious or epidemical nature of enthusiasm is well known, and in Mohamed's case it seems to have been exhibited in a very wonderful manner. As we have seen, the city of Medina was won before the Prophet's sword was drawn; therefore to the sword the conquest cannot be attributed. His first expedition consisted of only thirty-eight men, a very small force with which to begin the conquest of world; his second of three hundred; and thus every battle, whether won or lost, seems to have increased the number of his soldiers. It will be said that it is no uncommon thing for victory to increase the number of a general's soldiers. This is very true; but he took no recruits

into his ranks who did not at least profess to believe in his religion—*That God was God, and Mohamed his prophet*,—a plain, simple dogma, certainly not difficult to comprehend or to remember. But the enthusiasm of his followers seems to have increased with the increase of their number, and the great and numerous armies of his successors had this quality, so desirable for a conqueror, in as really high perfection as the smaller armies of the prophet himself. The case was evidently this; every victory gave to the preachers of the holy religion (and every soldier was a preacher) a new opportunity for the exertion of his talents, and a most favourable field to exercise them upon.

153. In addition to happiness in the life to come, liberty was the instant reward of the Jewish or Christian prisoner. To the man whose freedom, by the laws of war, had become forfeited; who, without entirely giving up his early Jewish or Christian prejudices, could persuade himself to believe that Mohamed

was specially ordained *to complete, not to overthrow*, his religion, the miraculous success of the Prophet and of the Crescent^a was a seducing argument. This was no miracle hid under a bushel, but a great and burning light, well calculated to dazzle the eyes and understandings of the thinking, as of the unthinking, part of mankind. To the young and thoughtless was added whatever has been tempting to a soldier's eye—glory, plunder, women, and, above all, success. To the settled, peaceable fathers of families in the countries subdued, ease and security, and the chance of a better government; for it is evident that in the time of Mohamed very few of the conquered countries could have had a *worse*. These were among the causes which increased the numbers, but there must have been something else which created the enthusiasm.

^a The Crescent was the Byzantine (Christian) standard, which passed into the hands of the Mohammedans with the conquest of Constantinople by Mohammed the Conqueror.

154. A person having a slight inclination towards the religion of the Prophet might easily persuade himself that in his doctrine there was nothing repugnant to the religion of Moses or of Jesus, nothing directly at variance with either. Moses had promised, in the Pentateuch, that a Prophet greater than himself would be sent by God. So to the ten tribes of Samaria, who were at this time very numerous, and who rejected all the other books of the Old Testament, and who, perhaps, looked for a conquering prophet, not a spiritual Messiah, there would appear to be no reason why Mohamed, the descendant of Ishmael, should not be the man. If they asked for a miracle, the victory of the Crescent is the answer; and the sword of the conquering and invincible prophet the rod of Aaron, which was giving to him the conquest of the world. With the sect of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin he does not appear to have been so successful as with the rest of the tribes of Israel; for he seems to

have entirely swallowed up the latter. If they be not absorbed among his followers, what has become of them? Christians and Jews say that the Samaritans were nothing but descendants of Cuthite idolaters.¹ Cuthites or Israelites, they were just as bigoted to the law of Moses as the other two tribes, and must have been very numerous, or they could not have sent out armies from time to time to fight, sometimes with strangers, and sometimes with their brethren of Judah.

155. After the destruction of Jerusalem, we know that the Romans sold a very great number of unfortunate Jews

¹ If it be allowed that the natives of Samaria were descended from Cuthite idolaters, the history informs us that they were taught the law of Moses by a priest sent by the King of Babylon for that purpose, and they had become excessively numerous in the time of the Romans. They had possessed a most magnificent temple on mount Gerizim to the time of King Hircanus, who destroyed it. They supposed themselves to consist of the descendants of the ten tribes, and therefore my argument will apply to them just the same, whether they were really the descendants of the tribes or not.

into captivity; and we may be well assured that the followers of Mohamed would leave no argument unused to bring into the pale of the Prophet the descendants of these miserable, unoffending captives, as well as such other of their countrymen as a state of wretchedness laid peculiarly open to their attacks; not the attacks of persecution, not the attacks of fire and sword, but attacks; of a much more dangerous nature—the temptation of ease, comfort, and happiness, operating upon the exhausted patience and the disappointed hopes of misery and woe. The experience of all ages had taught, that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church; and that the sword and faggot never succeeded in making proselytes. We occasionally see a Jew really converted to Christianity; but it is seldom when he cries Old Clothes, but when he has become possessed of half a million.

The Paraclete

156. With the Christians, Mohamed, the messenger of the one only true God,

must have had less difficulty than with the Jews. His system is built essentially upon the Christian foundation. No Jew can become a Mohamedan without first admitting that Jesus was a prophet "divinely inspired by God. How much more than this is it that the Unitarian Christian believes? It does not appear that Mohamed believed any more, or that he required any more to be believed by his disciples, though they might believe almost as much more as they chose. But there is another very striking argument, an argument of the first importance, which aided him very much with the Christians, which has been recorded both by friends and foes, but to which the latter have not paid so much attention as it deserves. It was the universal tradition, as well as the words of the record, the gospel histories, that Jesus, before his ascension, promised his disciples that he would send a person to them, some capacity or other; the Greek of our Gospels says, as a *Paraklytos*, translated Comforter.

157. The Mohamedans maintained, and yet maintain, that Mohamed was this person foretold by Jesus Christ, the same as Cyrus was by Isaiah—both by name;—that he was called by Jesus, not by a word which ought to be rendered in the Greek language, as in our gospel histories, *paraklytos*, but *periklutos*, which means not comforter, but famous or illustrious, and which, in Arabic, is the meaning of the word Mohamed; that the gospel of the Christians¹ had originally the latter of those words, but that it was corrupted to disguise the truth. They also allege that the Christians cannot deny that there are corruptions, or various readings, in their present copies, and they say that all the autographs were destroyed to conceal this passage. The fact of the loss of the autographs cannot be denied, and is a fact very difficult satisfactorily to account for; and as for ancient copies, there does not exist one before the sixth century.²

¹ John xiv. 16, 26, and xv. 26, and xvi. 7.

158. In reply to this it will be said, that it may be proved, by passages in Tertullian and other ancient fathers, that the true reading of the gospel histories was anciently, long before the time of Mohamed, as it is now, and, therefore, that they have not been corrupted. But it will be necessary to shew that the works of these ancient fathers have not been corrupted, which they may have been. Those who would destroy the ancient manuscripts of the gospel histories, would not scruple at rewriting a skin of parchment on which an ancient father's work was written: and it is admitted by the first divines of the Christians that they have been corrupted to serve other purposes:¹ and those who would do it in one case would do it in another. That the word being confessed to be Hebrew, if it be wrong written, it is much more likely that the early Christian writers, the *greatest liars upon earth*, should lie to serve their own

² Vide Marsh's Michaelis.

¹ Ibid. chap. ix.

purpose, than that St. John, a Hebrew, understanding both Hebrew and Greek, (even without allowing to him the gift of tongues,) should have made a mistake, and rendered the word, by wrong Greek letters, *klytos* instead of *klutos*--and that, therefore, it follows that the text of John has been corrupted.

159. They further add, that it is a well-known fact that a person was expected by great numbers of Christians, in accordance with the prophecy, from a very early period, which shews that the construction put on the passage in the Acts, by the Roman Church and by Protestants, was not general. Of this, Montanus, in the second century, earlier than Tertullian, furnishes an example. He was considered by his followers to be the promised person, which afforded to his opponents an opportunity for propagating the unfounded and malicious report that he pretended to be the Holy Ghost. That it was to meet these persons, particularly Montanus, that the gospel histories were falsified, long before the time

of the real true paraclete, or periclyte, as Mohamed, by his success, is proved to have been. That after the time of Montanus, but long before the time of Mohamed, Manes was also held by his followers, who constituted, as Mons. Beausobre has proved, a great, learned, and powerful sect, to be the promised person. These persons seem, of all others, to have been the most likely to have understood the language in which Jesus spoke, and they could not discover the person in the twelve tongues of fire. But the result proved that Manes was not the person, and that his followers were mistaken.

160. They also add, that it is perfectly clear that the Christians might have preserved the precious autographs, if they had thought proper, as easily as they have preserved the relics of great numbers of the saints—the remains of St. John the Baptist, the Virgin, the bodies of St. Peter, Paul, &c., all which are to be seen every day in Italy.

161. The Mohamedans, who must be

heard in this case, will not fail to press upon the Christians that all the manuscripts were destroyed or falsified to conceal this mistranslation; that if they were not, why were they destroyed? and the Christians will be put to no little difficulty to find a satisfactory answer; for the fact of the destruction of the manuscripts cannot be denied, as they do not exist. But they will go further, and allege that, taking the Christians on their own ground, that a comforter was promised, it is a mere abuse of language to say that the appearance of twelve tongues of fire can be this person; that, in fact, Mohamed answers to this person, and that there has never been any one but *he* who does. That the Acts of the Apostles, the book of the Christians, itself by no means says or implies that the filling of the apostles with the holy spirit was the sending of the comforter promised; and that the language will warrant no such conclusion.

162. That at the feast of Pentecost this comforter or paracletos is said to have come

to the apostles; but that certainly a cloven fiery tongue settling upon each apostle, communicating to them at that moment the power of speaking all languages, would appear to a person whose mind was not prejudiced by education, to be a strange way for a person to come; and with respect to the mere endowment with the Holy Ghost, this could not be necessary, because it appears, from the 22d verse of the 20th chapter of John, that Jesus himself had already endowed them with this gift a little before his ascension, not two months before the day of Pentecost, the time of which we are speaking.

163. That the books of the Acts nowhere says that these fiery tongues, giving them the power of speaking all languages, were the promised comforter, which it would have done if so they had been.

164. If, in answer to this, it be said that the gifts related in Matthew, and the endowment with the Holy Ghost, recorded in the 22d verse of the 20th chapter of John, were only temporary and were withdrawn,

the Mohamedan will reply, that this is a mere subterfuge, not warranted by the text or context. These passages, from the sacred book of the Christians, the Mohamedans have a right in argument to quote against them, though they do not admit their authority.

165. The argument of the Mohamedans respecting the translation of the word into Gr. *paraklutos*, instead of *paraklytos*, receives a strong support from the mode adopted by St. Jerome in the Latin Vulgate in rendering it by the Latin word *Paraclitus*, instead of *Paracletus*. This shews that the copy from which St. Jerome translated must have had the word *paraklutos*, and not *paraklytos*. This also strongly supports the Mohamedan assertion relating to the destruction of the old manuscripts.

166. Upon the meaning of this word *paraklytos* much diversity of opinion has arisen among divines. The celebrated Michaelis says, "Ernesti has very properly remarked, that it signifies neither Advocate nor Comforter; and adds, Ego

certissimum arbitror Gr. *paraklyton*, ubi de Spiritu Sancto dicitur, nihil aliud significare quam *doctorem*, *magistrum*, divinæ veritatis *interpretēm*. I agree with him in his opinion of the impropriety of the common translation, though, instead of doctor or magister, I would rather use Monitor.¹ The meaning which he has given it has been adopted by many, yet his mode of demonstration is somewhat extraordinary; for, instead of attempting to discover *paraklytos* in a classic author, and explain its meaning from actual use, he has recourse to the verb from which it is derived, and the assistance of a pretended Hebraism."

167. Respecting this word the learned and venerable Bishop Marsh observes, "We have the choice, then, of three interpretations of *waraklytos*. 1, that of Advocate, its classical sense, and adopted by the Greek fathers; 2, that of Interpres, given by Ernesti, and grounded on the authority of the Chaldee word *Phrqlyt*,

¹ Marsh's Mich. chap. 4. sect. 14. p. 188.

which admits that sense, and was probably used by Christ himself; 3, that of Monitor, adopted by our author, on the authority of a passage in Philo." Hence it is very evident that great uncertainty and doubt hang over the meaning of this celebrated word, and of the nature of this messenger which Jesus had promised to send. This, I think, cannot be denied.

168. Of the gospel of Barnabas, Mr. Sale says, in the preface to his translation of the Koran, p. 98, "This book appears to be *no* original forgery of the Mohamedans, though they have no doubt interpolated and altered it since, the better to serve their purpose; and in particular, instead of the Paraclete, or Comforter, they have in this apocryphal gospel inserted the word Periclyte, that is, the famous or illustrious, by which, they pretend, their prophet was foretold by name, that being the signification of Mohamed in Arabic: and this they say to justify that passage of the Koran where Jesus Christ is formally asserted

to have foretold his coming under his other name of Ahmed, which is derived from the same root as Mohamed, and of the same import."

169. It must be confessed that the word, as written by Bishop Marsh, and as it is almost certain that it must have been used (as he observes) by Jesus Christ, appears strongly to support the assertion of the Mohamedans, as here stated by the very learned Mr. Sale. I am of opinion that the Mohamedans have as much right to render this word by the word Periclite or Periclyte, as the Christians have by the word Paraclete. Nay more, I maintain that the balance of probability is on the side of the Mohamedans, because the Christians cannot be justified in rendering the Chaldee *jod* in the last syllable by the Greek letters *e* or *y*, instead of the letter *i*.

170. The Chaldee *i* or *jod* is the tenth letter of the alphabet, and has the power in notation of the number ten, and it ought, if the word is to be literally transferred from one language into

the other, to be rendered by the letter in the Greek which stands for the number ten, and was originally the tenth in the alphabet before the Greeks lost the digamma, as I have abundantly proved in my Essay on the Celtic Druids.

171. But I go further than this, and I say that, if the word used by Jesus was [*phrqlyt,*] PRQLIT, and that this word does mean, as Mr. Sale says, illustrious, then that the translation of it into the Greek word *waraklytos* is wrong (a various reading); and that all the translations of both Bishop Marsh and Ernesti are wrong, and that it ought to be rendered by a term answering to the word *illustrious*, which of course must be *periklutos*.

172. But this ought not to be translated *a paraclete*, as a proper name, but a name of description, as the Mohammedans do, viz. *illustrious*. If this were a Chaldee, Hebrew, or Arabic word, used by Jesus, it ought to have the sense given to it which the word in those languages means. If it be a Chaldee

word derived from an Arabic root, then it ought to be rendered in the meaning which the Arabic root conveys, and then it would be illustrious, or an illustrious person.

173. If my reader will turn to his Scapula he will see that the word *klutos* is used, for an illustrious man, both by Homer and Hesiod. Thus, I think, there is quite plausibility enough in the argument of the Mohamedans to render it no way wonderful that there should be much difficulty in convincing them that they are wrong. This is saying the least. But I have not seen their argument refuted.

174. The following is the passage which the Mohamedans say was expunged : *And when Jesus, the son of Mary, said, "O children of Israel, verily, I am the apostle of God sent unto you, confirming the law which was delivered before me, and bringing good tidings of an apostle who shall come after me, and whose name shall be Ahmed."*¹

¹ Koran, Vol. II. c. lxi. p. 423 and note on

175. But I have something still more to say respecting this celebrated word Prqlit. It is admitted by Bishop Marsh, an authority not to be disputed, when quoted in argument by a Mohamedan, that it is a Syro-Chaldee word, or an Arabic word, and not Greek. One or both of these languages must have been spoken or at least understood by Mohamed, and there is no reason to believe that the Greek translation of the word would ever become a subject of discussion by him. What had he to do in Arabia with GREEK TRANSLATIONS of the speeches of Jesus? What had they to do there? Of what use could they be to people who did not understand a word of them, but who understood the original spoken by Jesus? He would take the word as handed down to him by tradition, or if written in the word named by Mr. Sale, which meant illustrious, and he probably never inquired any farther. How absurd to suppose that he would go to writings in a foreign language to ditto by Sale in loc.

explain to him the meaning of a word in his own! He received the word as a human person, like many other sects in that day, and would as little allow it to mean the third person of a Trinity as the Unitarians do at this day. It is even possible that he might receive it in the sense of illustrious, and might never have any dispute or doubt on the subject.

176. Thus much respecting the prophecy of Mohamed in the New Testament. But he was also, as his followers say foretold by name in the Old. The Reverend and very pious Mr. Parkhurst, a most unwilling witness, on the root H M D, says, "This word is applied to all sorts of sacred things, both of the true and false worship, which were to the respective parties eminently the *objects of their desire and affections*. See, inter al., Hag. ii. 7, *And the desire of all nations shall come*: H M D—From this root the pretended prophet Mohammed or Mahomet had his name."

177. On this passage of Mr. Parkhurst's

a Mohamedan would exclaim, "Here you see, that he was actually foretold by name in the Old as well as in the New Testament,—that the application of this prophecy to Jesus Christ has, in fact, been a mistake; it was intended, as the name shews, for the person sent by Jesus himself to complete his mission, and referred to by him in the word *epaggelian*, Luke xxiv. 49. And for this I have the authority of your own very celebrated divine, Parkhurst. That it was meant for Mohamed and not for Jesus or the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit or a divine influence, is evident, because it foretells the former by name. No Mohamedan corruption of a text can be pretended here."

178. The exact time when, from Idolater, Mohamed became Christian, I have not been able to discover; for it is probable that he would be a Christian some time before he would begin to suppose himself the *resoul* or the sent of God. It does not seem at all unlikely that he should have made considerable progress

in converting his countrymen from their idolatry, before the prophecy of the Christians led him to believe himself the person foretold. But when he contemplated his prospect of success, and the striking fact that he bore the name of the person actually said to be foretold, it does not seem unlikely that these very circumstances should have had much influence in confirming him in the belief of Christianity. And the fact that the Greek gospel histories represented the person foretold by Jesus in a different manner from the oriental histories, and the general belief of the people in *his* country, *might* be a principal reason for his refusing to receive them. For it must not be forgotten that the Montanists, one of whom was the very celebrated apologist, Tertullian, and all the Cerinthians, the Marcionites, the Gnostics, and the rich, splendid, and learned sect of the Manichæans, refused to receive the texts alluded to in the sense in which they were received by the Trinitarians of the Roman church. All these people

believed that the head of his sect was the sent of God, the person promised. Tertullian did not join the Montanists till (as is alleged by the orthodox writers) after he published his *Apology* for Christianity; till he had all the advantage of experience, and was considerably advanced in years. He did not obtain a bishopric by adopting this opinion, as Augustin did when he quitted the Manichæans, and who must have believed that Mani was the Paraclete as long as he continued with them, viz. nine years. When St. Augustin gave up the opinion that Mani was the Paraclete, and went over to the Romish faith, he quitted the cell of a monk for the palace of a bishop; for the elect of the Manichæans were, in fact, monks.

179. I request my reader to place himself in imagination in the situation of, I think I have now a right to say, this *illustrious* reformer—this philosophic-al reformer of idolatry in the midst of idolaters, and consider what he would see. On every side he would find him-

self surrounded with the most base and degrading superstition. Among the Christians scarcely any thing but idols and the adoration of bits of rotten wood, relics, creeds and sects innumerable, and every where civil and religious warfare: gospel histories in scores, among which it would be impossible for him to make a selection: for he could not select the four from any great pre-eminence of merit, as, to him, they must have appeared contaminated with the gross absurdities of demoniacs, and the passages respecting the temptation in the wilderness, and the pinnacle of the temple, which are now allowed to have a very different meaning from the letter of them, which was then universally received. This is on the supposition that he saw the four-gospel histories, which is very doubtful, and which I cannot allow to be taken for granted, without some show of proof. A few similar loose expressions in the spurious Koran cannot be admitted as evidence, even if they should be found; nor even, as evidence against Mohamed,

an actual quotation itself from that disputed book.

180. It must be remembered that the sect of Nestorius prevailed in Arabia; and I think, when it is considered that this sect in the time of Mohamed received the gospel called the Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus, it is very improbable that it should have received the Roimish four, so that it is not only very possible, but very probable, that Mohamed never saw our four.

181. The Nestorians, at least those reconciled or united to the Roman church, now receive the four, but it is my opinion that the sect did not always receive them.¹

182. It is pretty clear that a person called in the Asiatic languages PRQLIT was believed by all the eastern nations to have been foretold by Jesus, whose gospel and prophecies appear to have

¹ See the proceedings of the Portuguese at Goa against the Malabar Christians, who were excommunicated expressly for receiving this gospel history.

been known to, and believed by, Mohamed; but it does not appear to be certain that he was acquainted with the four Romish gospel histories: therefore he *probably* did not know, and *certainly* would not care, as it no way concerned him, in what manner the Greeks had translated into their language the eastern word of his country, which he must understand. He only knew that a person was foretold, and it is no way surprising, under all the circumstances, that he should fall into a belief that he was that person. It was not absurd in him to say, "If I be the person foretold, like Cyrus, God will so dispose events and the hearts of men, that success will crown my efforts in the good cause in which I am engaged, and prove the truth of the prophecy. If I be destined to succeed, the minds of men will be disposed without miracles to receive the truth, and that without the necessity of using force or violence." And accordingly we find no burnings or persecutions in the beginning of Mohamedism.

183. In this he was also probably

sincere, imagining himself, like Johanna Southcote, Baron Swedenborg, John Wesley, and many others, to be inspired. The words of our gospels which seem to convey the meaning of *spirit*, were held by him to be corrupt.

184. I have already observed, that the way in which the several sects declined, in a little time, was in itself a sufficient proof of their mistake in supposing their leaders to be the promised person, and they gradually became extinct. Montanus has been vilified by the orthodox priests for calling himself the Holy Spirit. But this was a gross misrepresentation. Although he admitted the gospel of Jesus, he denied the authority of our four histories, and maintained that the person promised was not a spirit, but a human person. This was the origin of the false charge against him, as has been most satisfactorily proved by Mons. Beausobre.

185. In the same way with Montanus, probably Mohamed supposed himself to be the person promised. Many very extraordinary circumstances united to

justify his belief. In the first place, I repeat, the word Prqlit had the same meaning as the word Mo-Ahmed; and he might conceive himself to be thus foretold in Haggai by name, as Cyrus was of old by Isaiah. Secondly, the necessity of some one to reform and correct the abuses which had crept into Christianity and deluged the world with blood, was sufficiently evident; and, thirdly, his success might appear to him to prove the truth of his mission, and lead him to exclaim, If this continue, it will continue to prove that I am a resoul or person sent by God, or preordained to this service. Although I am endowed with no supernatural powers, like Jesus,¹ the reason may be that they are not now required; he by his miracles may have prepared the way, and the

¹ It must not be forgotten that the divine mission, and the truth of the assertion that Jesus performed miracles, are admitted in almost every page of the Koran.^a

^a It is not a fact that Mohammed attributed to Jesus any miraculous powers. As I have already shown, Mohammed looked upon miracles as perfect myths deserving of no consideration.

world, if I be not mistaken, is ready for my doctrines,—doctrines of truth, with which I FEEL that I am inspired, and of which feeling I only can be the judge,—doctrines which are, in fact, nothing more than the pure, unadulterated doctrines of the gospel of Jesus, which have been lost sight of by the numerous sects which are persecuting one another about them. If I succeed, my success being without the aid of miracles, the evidence will not be liable to deterioration from the lapse of time—and universal success will be the proof of its truth.

186. Christians, to blind themselves, may turn into ridicule as much as they please the idea that Mohamed was the promised person, but this will not change the fact, that he was so considered, and is yet so considered, by one hundred and fifty millions of persons. When, as I have read, forty thousand commentators were at work on the Koran, it cannot be supposed that every thing which Arabian skill and sagacity could devise, would fail to be said. It cannot be sup-

posed that the subject of the Paraclete would not have justice done to it. It cannot and will not be denied, that the circumstances of the world were, in a very peculiar manner, favourable to the reception of a reformer of the then corrupted religion of Jesus; and probably hundreds of millions of those who received Mohamed, never heard of the words in our Gospels and Acts relating to the Holy Spirit; and if they had, they would have denied their authority. But even if they had received them, a short answer might satisfy willing hearers: "You say the New Testament teaches that the spirit of truth should come. True, the spirit of truth did come; he came in Mohamed, who was inspired with the spirit of truth. This is the true meaning of your figurative expression, and the whole that it will fairly bear."

187. Under all these circumstances, admitting even that the meaning of this celebrated word is doubtful, it requires no very great stretch of imagination to

believe that a person a little tinctured with fanaticism might readily persuade himself that he was actually the person prophesied of and sent by Jesus, as we find other persons at different times actually imagined themselves to be the person (some of whom suffered persecution, and were ready to seal, and I believe actually did seal, their faith with their blood). The life of solitude and retirement which Mohamed led for many years, was not unlikely to create such imaginations; and the success of his efforts, every day opening new and unexpected objects to his view, was not unlikely to foster and cherish them. The climate of Arabia, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, always celebrated for the liveliness of their imagination and their poetical genius, strengthen the probability that the prophet himself might be the victim or dupe of this hallucination. When the circumstances of his early life, so honourable and praiseworthy, are considered, it is difficult to believe in his subsequent villainy and total

want of all principle, and it is also very uncandid and uncharitable to attribute his actions to evil motives, so long as good ones can be consistently and with probability pointed out.

188. I am quite certain that no unprejudiced person can doubt the sincerity of Johanna Southcote, Emanuel Swedenborg, and John Wesley, to whom I have already alluded, in the profession of their divine commissions; and if Mohamed found a person foretold, who was designated as *illustrious*, or the *desire of all nations*, and his name had the same meaning; when he contemplated his success in converting the chief persons of his country, and in overthrowing its idols, can it be wondered at that he should turn Christian and suppose himself the person foretold? I confess, under all circumstances, I cannot very well see how he could help it.

189. I will venture to say that there never has been an instance of any individual who had more powerful reasons for turning Christian than were possessed

by Mohamed. He was, if the Koran may be taken as authority, a believer in the divine mission of Jesus, in the doctrines which he preached, in his immaculate conception, in the miracles which he performed, and in his resurrection¹ and ascension.²

190. However, whether the alleged prophet was the dupe of mental delusion or not, it is very certain that he was believed to be, and was held up by his followers to the Christian to be, the paraclete actually promised by Jesus; and to the millions of persons in the Asiatic nations who admitted the tradition of the promise of Jesus, but did not admit the four gospels of the Romish church, whether corrupted or not, the argument would apply with peculiar force.

¹ Although, like many other Christians of his day, he held that Jesus only *appeared* to be crucified, but was not so in reality.

² Mohammed does *not* appear to have believed that Jesus was born without an earthly father. Neither did he believe in the so-called "resurrection" of Jesus, or his "ascension." But he never resisted the believers on this ground.

The promise was not denied, and the utility, not to say necessity, of some one to heal the dissensions and put a stop to the endless feuds and bloody contests of the numerous sects, seemed to admit of no doubt. Thus I think we may fairly conclude that all the sects which did not admit our gospels soon merged in the followers of the paraclete of Arabia. Among these were the Nazarenes, Ebionites, Marcionites, Manichæans, and all different sects of Gnostics, as well as many others. With the Christians who admitted the four gospels there would be a little more difficulty; but the same arguments which weigh with the Unitarians of this day to prevent them from seeing the third person of the Trinity in the Paraclete named in in the fourteenth chapter of John and the second of the Acts, we may readily conceive, would very easily operate upon numbers of the wretchedly ignorant fanatics of the seventh century, particularly when aided by the seductive arguments of peace and liberty.

191. No doubt all these reasons for the success and rapid increase of Mohamedism will be produced by the zealous Christian as a reproach. But how could Mohamed be to blame for this state of things? It is evident that it was not the effect of design; it was the effect of unforeseen circumstances. And the Mohamedan will say that it is no reflection upon Mohamed that, when God thought proper to inspire him to promulgate the truth to mankind—the unity of God and a future state—he did it in such a way and under such circumstances as would insure success. The Christian must take care how he used this kind of reproach in argument; it is a two-edged sword, and may cut the hand that uses it.

192. It is a striking circumstance that the Mohamedans do not deny that our four histories of the gospel were the works of the persons whose names they bear; they only say they have been so corrupted by the Christian priests, that no dependence can be placed upon them:

and, unquestionably, if a Turk were asked for an example, a Christian would find much difficulty in replying to him if he produced the 7th verse of the 5th chapter of the First Epistle of John, the interpolation of which is demonstrated in the works of the Porson and Newton, as well as some others, which might easily be found in White's *Synopsis Griesbachiae*.

193. The gospel history of Barnabas, from which Mohamed is said mostly to quote in the Koran,¹ had a very great circulation in the East. In it the coming of Mohamed is repeatedly foretold. Dr. White says it is interpolated to serve the purpose of Mohamed. This is possible. Nor can we be surprised at it when we find Romish and Protestant Christians have done the same thing, with the most unblushing effrontery, in their sacred writings, in both ancient and modern times.²

¹ White's Sermons, notes, p. xi.

² It is from Christian authors I learn that the quotations in the Koran are from the gospel history of Barnabas, not from the Mohamedans. I am

194. For example: the passage of John, named above. This impudent fraud was probably executed by the priests of the Romish church. Luther, in the Bible which he published, omitted it, and on his death-bed, is said to have most earnestly requested his followers not to let it be inserted with his name. However, this was disregarded, and in the Bible, said in the title-page to be the work of Luther, it is inserted by the united authority of the Lutheran church of Germany. Thus, if this pious fraud was begotten by the Romish priests, it was adopted by the Protestants, who have not been, and are not yet, less zealous in its protection. This is only one of the thirty thousand various readings confessed by divines to exist in the gospels

by no means certain that Mohamed knew any more of it than of the Romish gospel histories, though Othman might. I do not think Mohamed would have had any thing to do with so contemptible a performance. Persons forget the important distinction between the gospel or doctrine taught by Barnabas and the gospel history supposed to have been written by him.

and epistles. The Codex Montfortianus, now in the public library at Dublin, was forged for the express purpose of supporting this text.¹

195. It would be unjust to the Roman church not to add here the fact, that a version of this epistle was published at Rome long after the forgery, (with the Papal authority of course,) in one of the oriental languages, in which this passage was omitted; which shews that the forgery might be the act of some low priests, and not of the Papal church itself.

196. Notwithstanding the eminence both of Dr. White and Mr. Sale, I take the liberty of saying, that I am not convinced by their mere assertion that the gospel history of Barnabas, such as it is, has been interpolated. Unless they have some variation of manuscripts to plead, or some other similar substantial reason to assign, I cannot assent to their opinions; and that they have no such reason I

¹ Vide Marsh's Michaelis.

am justified in believing because they have not assigned it. Though, of course, I am no believer in the divine inspiration of the gospel history of Barnabas, I am by no means certain that the prophecy was not originally there; and I am also by no means certain that it may not have conduced to its own fulfilment, which has been the case with many prophecies besides this, both of what have been called sacred and profane. The difficulty of interpolating the gospel histories after the third century, has been very forcibly dwelt upon by Machaelis and Bishop Marsh. All the arguments against the interpolation of our gospel histories in the third or fourth centuries, apply with equal, indeed with greater, force against the interpolation of the gospel of Barnabas in a much *later* period—the seventh century. The later it was, the more difficult it would evidently be.

197. This gospel was received by multitudes of Christians long before the time of Mohamed. It seems difficult to

conceive that the learned Musselmen who swarmed in the second century of the Hegira, should not have discovered these interpolations, if they had been as gross as they have been represented. It seems unaccountable that, on the revival of letters, the Romish priests should not have discovered some old manuscripts in Greek, in Arabic, Syriac, or Coptic, in which the passages alluded to were wanting. Considering the triumphant argument these manuscripts would have afforded to the Christians in their controversies with the Mohamedans, it is surely unaccountable that not even one can be produced from the almost innumerable Christian monasteries of Greece, Syria, Egypt, &c., &c. On behalf of the Mohamedans, I challenge the Christian priests to produce a single manuscript copy of this gospel in which these passages are not found. Copies are common in Mohamedan countries, where there are plenty of Christian monasteries, in which they must still be if they have not been purposely destroyed.

Converts from Christianity

198. To the different sects of Christian religionists, I think, we may look for the recruits to the armies of the prophet; and in the circumstance that they would not be serving like mere soldiers of fortune, for pay, but men actually engaged by principle in his cause, we shall not look in vain for the reason of the enthusiasm by which they were actuated. If many, as would certainly be the case, were lukewarm at first, fanaticism would not be long before it would convert them heartily to the cause. Nothing is more infectious than fanaticism; and in this case it would be aided by the doctrines of fate and predestination, and by a variety of self-interested motives, which are so obvious that it is unnecessary to point them out.

199. To the reasons which the reader has seen for the rapid propagation and success of Mohamedism, may be added the total abstinence in its followers of persecution, at least as far as concerned

Jews and Christians. As the Rev. Mr. Robinson has said, "Jews and Christians all lived happily among them." This will surprise Christians at this day very much, but it is nevertheless true. The enlightened subjects of the caliphs. persecuted none; and had their empire continued, instead of having been overthrown by the Turks, then in a state of barbarism, and had extended to European Greece, I have no doubt that the same effect would have been produced as that which was produced in Persia, Arabia, and most parts of Asia and Africa. Scarcely a Christian would have been left at this day. Mere barbarism may be thought insufficient to account for the excessive hatred of the modern Turks to the Christians. I have no doubt that their bigotry and their hatred of the Christians were in a great measure caused by the bigotry and the hatred of the Christians towards them—by the Crusades, the expulsion of all the Moriscoes of Spain whom the Christians were unable to murder, and by the perpetual

piracies of the pious knights of Malta. What would the Christians have said if the Turks had expelled all the inhabitants of Greece when they took Constantinople, as the Christians expelled the Moriscoes from Spain, instead of leaving them in possession of their lands, houses, patriarchs, bishops, priests, churches, and monasteries? To these causes, joined to excessive ignorance, may be attributed the difference between the Turks and their precursors, the Saracens; and to the persecuting spirit generated by these causes may be attributed the fact of the existence of a single Christian in Greece. It is this spirit of intolerance which is increasing the members of the Roman church in Ireland, and has prevented the propagation of Mohamedism in Greece.

200. The tolerant spirit of the caliphs appears to be strictly accordant with that of Mohamed, as may be seen in the following passage, in which enough escapes to shew to an impartial person the true character of the prophet: com-

ing from Mr. Sale, it is the admission of an unwilling witness:—"Hitherto, Mohammed had propagated his religion by fair means, so that the whole success of his enterprise, before his flight to Medina, must be attributed to persuasion only, and not to compulsion. For, before this second oath of fealty or inauguration at Al Akaba,¹ he had no permission to use any force at all; and in several places of the Koran, which he pretended were revealed during his stay at Mecca, he declares his business was only to preach and admonish; that he had no authority to compel any person to embrace his religion; and that whether people believed or not, was not his concern, but belonged only to God. And he was so far from allowing his followers to use force, that he exhorted them to bear patiently those injuries which were offered them on account of their

¹ This alludes to an oath which, it is said, he exacted from a deputation of proselytes from Medina, that they should be faithful to him and protect him from his enemies.—Sale, Prel. Dis., p. 63.

faith; and, when persecuted himself, chose rather to quit the place of his birth, retire to Medina, than to make any resistance."¹

The Sunnah

201. Besides the Koran, the Mohamedans have a collection of what were said to be the sayings of the prophet remembered by his followers after his death, and forming thirty books, which is called the Sonnah.^a To this much respect is paid, but it is not considered equal to the Koran. I have never seen it, but I presume it contains nothing prejudicial to Mohamed or his religion, as Dean Prideaux, though he notices the work, does not notice any thing of that kind. Though this may constitute present Islamism, it evidently no way concerns Mohamed. The author of these books was called Al Bochari; he died

¹ Prel. Dis., p. 64.

^a On this subject, see Introd. to my *Sayings of the Prophet Muhammad*.

A. D. 869. It does not appear to me that any one of the authors from whom our modern historians have drawn their information, lived earlier than about two hundred years after the death of Mohamed. There seems not to be one contemporary author. Even the Sonnah was not compiled till about two hundred years after Mohamed. Under these circumstances, how little of what our bigoted historians have written can be depended on! Abulfeda, who died A. D. 1345, appears to be the best of them, yet his work, in retailing the contemptible stories of prodigies which took place on the birth of the prophet, betrays his own absurdly credulous character.¹

202. Severe censures have been passed on several of the laws of Moses which appear to us to be trifling or cruel; but in various instances a more accurate knowledge of the circumstances under which they were ordained has taught us that these censures were unjust, or has

¹ Abulfeda, p. 112.

furnished a reasonable apology for these laws; and this, combined with a consideration of the general character of Moses and of his laws, seems to raise a fair presumption that, were we equally informed respecting the other laws alluded to of the same kind, we should always find some satisfactory reasons for his conduct.

203. Thus with respect to Mohamed, satisfactory reasons may be assigned for laws which appear cruel, unjust, impolitic, or too lenient.^a For instance: though murder is forbidden, under the severest penalties to be inflicted in the next life, yet a murder is allowed by the Koran to be compounded for on payment of such sum as may be agreed on betwixt the murderer and the next of kin, and the giving of freedom to a Musselman captive.^b The object of this

^a There are *no* such laws given by Mohammed.

^b On *no* account is a murder allowed to be compounded by the Koran, except in pursuance of an agreement to that effect arrived at in the pre-Islamic period in respect of a murder committed during that period. Cf. S. 2. 178, 179.

was to prevent the private wars which had hitherto taken place among the Arabs to avenge murder, by which, at times, whole tribes were destroyed.¹

204. Thus, when an enlarged view is taken of the conduct of Moses, and of Mohamed, or the writer of the Koran, they are often even in very doubtful cases found to be justified. This Christian bigots can allow to be just with respect to the former, but with respect to the latter they fix upon some particular point without regarding the context, the reason, or the circumstances, and thus indulge their malice for the glory of God. But they are educated in an habitual hatred of what they believe to be an imposture, and become blinded by prejudice to their own injustice. But the ultra pious people, those described in modern cant as warmed with "a live coal from off the altar," never reason. They seem to be incapable of reasoning.

205. Much diversity of opinion has arisen on the question whether Mohamed

¹ Sale, Prel. Dis., sect. vi. p. 185.

could or could not write.* I am of opinion, with the Oxonian Professor, Dr. White, that the affirmative of this question is probable. And I believe the contrary has been asserted by the compiler of the Sonnah, and some others of the early and most bigoted of his followers, merely for the sake of making a miracle out of his ignorance. One of the authors quoted by Prideaux and the Oxford Professor, was called Jannabi or Gennabi; he states the Koran to contain sixty thousand miracles. Although some passages of the Koran state that Mohamed could not write, there are others which are in direct contradiction to this. In the 29th chap. of the Koran, Mohamed introduces God thus addressing him: "Thou couldest not read any book before this; neither couldest thou write it with thy right hand; for then had the gainsayers justly doubted of the divine origin thereof." Although it is said here that

* There is not one passage in the Koran to show that Mohammed was illiterate. Cf. my note on pp. 50-54, *ante*.

he could write, it is attributed to a miracle.^a In several places of the Koran he is called the illiterate prophet.

206. In one part of the Sonnah he is also said to have written occasionally. Professor White says, "On this was founded (*alluding to Mohamed's ignorance*) the most popular and prevailing argument for the truth of that revelation which he professed to communicate to the world. The elegant style of that

^a I give the literal rendering of the verse referred to. It is:

And thou didst not read any book before it, nor didst thou write it with thy right hand; then surely those who are given to vanity might have doubted. Nay, but it is signs evident in the breasts of those who are given knowledge. (S. 29. 48, 49.)

Where Mohammed is said not to be much given to reading and writing, for then could his opponents justly say the Koran was the production of his own brain; whereas its thoroughly democratic conception of the Divine government, the universality of its religious ideal, not to mention its beautiful style and its sublimity of conception, at the back of which all was his own simple humanity—all differentiate the work from his predecessors' in authorship, clearly pointing to a yet higher source—that of inspiration from the Source of all goodness.

revelation, the harmony of its sentences, and the sublimity of its conceptions, were universally acknowledged. Was it not then absurd to imagine, (as the impostor specially argued,) that a work of such extraordinary beauty and excellence could ever have been composed by a man who was destitute of every species of acquired knowledge, and who, by his ignorance even of the common rudiments of early education, had been precluded from the perusal of books and the use of writing?"¹

207. Again he says, "We will not detract from the real merit of the Koran; we allow it to be generally elegant, and often sublime."

208. This is confirmed by Prideaux, if indeed it be not copied from Prideaux, who says, "It must be allowed that the Alcoran is, as to the style and language, the standard of elegancy in the Arab tongue."²

209. In these arguments of Drs. White

¹ Sermon IV.

² Prid. Hist. p. 29.

and Prideaux, they assume that the Koran was Mohamed's as in its present state. Although I agree with them in the conclusion they draw, I cannot admit this assumption. They forget that the doctrines taught by Mohamed are not necessarily the same as those in the books. Supposing them beautiful when delivered by Mohamed, how absurd is it to imagine that this beauty should continue when edited by Othman, and made out from *the memories of the faithful* after the lapse of twenty years! * This would be a miracle. Dr. White seems to make a strange mistake in his argument. What he puts in the mouth of the impostor, as he calls him, he ought to have put into the mouth of his followers, who lived after the publication of the work. The argument which is found in the work, is a proof that it is none of

* And though the memory of the Arabs had always been esteemed extraordinarily wonderful and accurate? But, as a matter of fact, the Koran was already put together by Abu-Bakr, with the assistance of the Companions, within a year after the death of the Prophet.

Mohamed's.

210. I have as much difficulty to believe in the extreme ignorance of the Koreish, the inhabitants of Mecca, as I have to believe in the ignorance of their prophet. Speaking of the language of the Arabians, of whom the tribe of Mohamed was the most distinguished, Dr. White says, "And if we look back for many ages on the history of the Arabians, we shall easily perceive that pride among them to have consisted in the knowledge and improvement of their native language. The Arabic, which has been justly esteemed the most copious of the Eastern tongues; which had existed from the remotest antiquity; which had been embellished by numberless poets, and refined by the constant exercise of the natives, was the most successful instrument which Mohamed employed in planting his new religion among them.¹

211. "The superior degree of refinement which the tribe of Koreish had

¹ Sermon VI.

introduced into their language, arose from various causes: from their distinguished rank as guardians of the Temple of Mecca; from their situation, almost in the centre of Arabia, which precluded them from such an intercourse with foreigners as might have corrupted their language; and, above all, by the continual resort of the several tribes to Mecca, which gave them an opportunity of selecting from their discourse and compositions such words and expressions as they deemed most elegant, and thus gradually of transfusing the various beauties of the whole language into their dialect."¹

212. It is difficult to believe that a tribe like the Koreish, taken such care about their language as is shewn above, can have been in the state of ignorance here represented—to have been most of them unable to write. If we admit that Mohamed left various tracts of some kind or other behind him, yet, after

¹ White, Note on Sermon VI.

admitting, what cannot be denied, that they were passed twice through the crucible, once by Abubeker, and a second time, twenty years afterward, by the Caliph Othman, they surely can no longer be called his; as well might we take a golden cup out of which he had drank, and after twice sending it to the goldsmith's and melting it into the form of a soup ladle, call it his ladle.

213. It is allowed to contain many very foolish things—things very much out of character with the general con-

* There was no question of passing Mohammed's Koran *through the crucible*. Mohammed took care, even as the Surabs or portions thereof were delivered by him, to get them recorded. These were subsequently collected together into a book by Abu-Bakr, and sent broadcast throughout his dominions. It was, however, reported during the Caliphate of Othman that in distant provinces, where the population was mostly non-Arab, there had crept into it, owing to a defective script, certain various readings. With the help of the other living Companions of the Prophet, therefore, Othman set himself to bring out or publish a well-authenticated recension, which has since been received throughout the Islamic world by *all* the divergent sectaries, their sectarian opposition to Abu-Bakr and Othman notwithstanding.

duct of the prophet's early life, besides many passages utterly inconsistent with one another.^a This does not look like the work of one original compositor, but much more like what we might have expected from the history of the Koran and its two publications, by Abubeker and Othman. But though the matter of it is discordant and inconsistent with itself, yet the style is uniformly elegant.

214. This is again what we must have expected. If it had been the work of Mohamed, interpolated and corrupted merely, the style would not have been uniform as it is found, but in many parts the corruption would have been apparent. But if it were entirely re-written, redacted by Othman, it might, and most likely would, be what we find it.^b The habits and language of his tribe would probably give him elegance of style. Let us suppose the Duke of Wellington, whose general talents no one

^a None that I can think of.

^b The author is severely prepossessed on this point. But see any modern writer.

will dispute, when engaged in his Spanish war, to have found it necessary to write or compose, and materially alter, a gospel from those we have at present, the pages and heading of the chapters being destroyed, and the gospels themselves being in confusion, and reduced into short scraps or treatises. I think we should find he would produce something like the Koran—a work containing contradictions^{*} and tautologies, but, (if his Grace had been accustomed to keep the best company, and talk the most elegant dialect of his country), like the Koran, we should find in it one uniform style and the most elegant language.

215. In our endeavours to discover what really was the character of Mohamed, and what were his doctrines, we must recollect that, though he was a Christian, with multitudes of other Christians, on account of corruptions, he rejected the four Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles,¹

¹ The Christian must not forget that the truth

* Does it, really?

and that we have no reason to believe that he was in any sense what may be called the author of the Koran. If he did leave any papers in a box, a very questionable matter, it is inferring rather too much, after knowing, as we have seen above, that they have been twice through the alchymical fires of Abubeker and Othman, to attribute any particular dogma of them to him, which may be to his disadvantage.^a Seeing that we know much respecting him that is good and excellent,^b we shall be acting very unjustly to receive any thing against him from the pages of his double-distilled fabrication of two such men as Othman and Abubeker,—men, though, perhaps, versed in the poetry and literature of their country, yet deeply tainted with the superstitions of the age in which

of *his* religion does not depend upon the Gospels, the Acts, or the Epistles. If it be true, it was true after the death of Jesus and before they were written. It would have been equally true if they had never been written at all.

Sic. ^b Whence, if not from the Koran?

they lived. That the Koran contains much that is excellent, and in character with what we certainly know of the early part of Mohamed's life, cannot be denied; and though it be not in our power with any certainty to pitch upon any particular passages, and say, This passage or that is from him, yet we are bound to give him credit for much of the excellent moral doctrine which it contains. Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the Gospel histories were to be proved spurious,¹ yet if I believed Jesus Christ to have lived, and the general character of his life to have been as it is represented to us in them, I should be obliged to believe that the moral doctrines which I find in them accordant with his character, were what he taught.* And if

¹ The reader will recollect that proving the spuriousness of the Gospel histories does not of itself necessarily prove them false; they may be forgeries and yet true. They may be true, though not written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

* In any case, you can only fall back upon the Gospel histories. Mohammed must stand or fall with the Koran, even as Jesus with the Gospels.

I found any thing in them disgraceful to him, and not accordant to his general character, I should disbelieve it.

216. It has been said that we have no right to assume that the Caliph Othman would make any material alterations, since it is reported that he only called in the copies to correct them from the papers in the box, as they had got corrupted by transcribers. But it is asserted that he went to the box for this purpose.¹ Why did he not go to the copy in the mosque at Medina, lying on the very desk where Abubeker had placed it, *in the sight of Othman himself?*—the copy which could not have been corrupted, except it were corrupted by the two preceding caliphs. This copy, in the space of the twenty-two years, could neither be corrupted by trans-

¹ It must not be forgotten that in the first instance these papers were obliged to be helped out by the *memories* of the faithful. They could not have been much improved by the lapse of twenty years.

cribers nor rotted by time. The case is evident. Something must be added, or something must be subtracted, to make the book speak a language suitable to the existing circumstances of the triumphant empire of the caliphs, and a plausible pretence must be found to enable the government to make the alteration.

217. After Mohamed had made some progress in the conversion of his countrymen from idolatry, it is not at all surprising that he should have been seduced (if it determined that his actions prove the charge) into an opinion that the end *for which* a thing is done, in certain cases, will justify the means *by which* it is done. When he was copying, as the priests say, and as I believe, the Christian morality, that is, the morality of his own adopted religion, it is not surprising that he should also have fallen into this pernicious error, which has been acted on by the Christian priests in every age. In the early times of the church of Christ, and, I

have little doubt, of the religion of Mohamed, the doctrine of the end sanctifying the means was universally held and defended. Even Grotius defended and practised it in the case of the dove. Can it then be a matter of surprise if Mohamed persuaded himself that the security of the worship of the one true God was identified with his possession of the sovereign power, freely bestowed upon him both by the inhabitants of Medina, and by all the great mass of people who had deserted the worship of idols, or the equally degrading and absurd *sectarian* doctrines of the Christians, to join his standard? And in the carrying on of wars and the causing of bloodshed, the good intention would not fail, as in the wars of the Christians, to justify the means; and holy as well as learned casuists have never in either party been found wanting to excuse them. Though it is impossible to defend misconduct in Mohamed by misconduct in Christians, yet it is impossible to be blind to the base hypocrisy

of the latter, who pretend to condemn in their opponents that conduct of which they themselves are guilty.

218. Mr. Gibbon has observed, "that the manners of the first four caliphs were alike pure and exemplary; that their zeal was fervent, and probably sincere; and that, in the midst of riches and power, their lives were devoted to the practice of moral and religious duties."¹ These were the men who formed the first of the congregation of the Prophet; who came over to his cause before he had possessed power, or had drawn the sword; when he was the victim of persecution, and obliged to flee his country to avoid assassination. Their early conversion proves their sincerity, and their conquest over the empires of the world prove the superiority of their talents.

219. Now, can any one believe that men like these would have attached themselves most enthusiastically, and have suffered banishment from their country

¹ Gibbon, chap. l. p. 260, 4to.

and persecution for the sake of a man disgraced by every vice, and for the sake of a system of fraud and imposture of the grossest nature, and directly contrary to the prejudices of their education and early life? It cannot be believed; it is contrary to all probability.

220. With men like these, probably—indeed, I may say certainly—the pernicious principle of the end sanctifying the means would justify equally the conquest of the empires of the enemies of God, and the redaction and improvement of the Koran, to make it what the premature death of the prophet had denied to him. And the memories of the faithful—superannuated devotees—would enable them to make it whatever their inclination prompted.

221. That these men were sincere disciples of Mohamed cannot be doubted. That they were in a very considerable degree conversant with the poetry and literature of the Koreish, the most elegant of the Arabians, can admit but of as little doubt; and when the belief

of such men as Locke and Newton in demons, Sir Matthew Hale in witchcraft, and the most enlightened of the Romish Church in Transubstantiation, is considered, how can we be surprised that the first caliphs should be tainted with superstition, or should have thought that there was no more harm in indulging some of the ancient prejudices of their countrymen in their renovated Koran, than the Christians before them had thought existed in adopting the Heathen festivals, &c., into the religion of Jesus? On these grounds, and on no other, can I account for the conduct of the first caliphs, or render it consistent with probability, the present state of the Koran, and the undisputed facts relating to it. Thus, as we might have expected, we find in many parts of it very absurd and superstitious ideas, but we find them clothed in the most elegant language of Arabia, and intermixed with the purest morality and the most sublime ideas of the Deity which the poetic-

al imaginations of oriental poets could furnish. Probably the world cannot produce finer or more sublime passages than are to be found in the Koran.

222. Nothing has been more common than for Christians in all ages to fancy themselves endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit: moved by the Spirit, as the Society of Friends calls it. What this motion was it is not very easy correctly to describe, because different persons probably ascribe to the word different meanings. It is not very improbable that Mohamed might really believe that he had an internal divine sensation, similar in some respects to the above. This, all his followers tell us, he pretended to have, and upon this Michaelis maintains that the whole of Mohamedism is grounded.¹ And he argues against the pretensions of the Christians to this endowment, gift, or whatever it may be called, because, as he justly observes, it will prove the truth of Mohamedism as well, if admitted, as

¹ Marsh's Mich. chap. iii. sect. ii. and note, p. 382.

of Christianity. No person can deny, that a man possesses this gift when he claims it, because no man can be a judge of it but himself. I do not think it impossible that Mohamed believed that he possessed this gift. Pious and good Christians believe themselves possessed of it every day.

223. It is evident, I think, that Mohamed may be placed under one or other of three classes of men. He may have been a philosopher, like Socrates or Pythagoras; or a fanatic, like John Wesley, Brothers, or Southcote; or merely an impostor. Of the last, I think, I may fairly assume that I have already disposed. There is no probability that he deserved to be called an impostor in any sense of the word. To decide his character in the other respects will be much more difficult. He may have been a fanatic or a philosopher, or a combination of the two. If we believe the stories of his fancied revelation from heaven, and his visions,^{*} we must

* And how should we believe when these are

undoubtedly give him the character of a fanatic; but I am by no means satisfied that he ever pretended to any such thing. It does not seem to me likely that men of the high rank and talents of his chief and most early associates would have joined themselves, and have gone into exile, with a man labouring under a mental hallucination of this kind; and yet his seclusion from society for many years seems to shew a tendency this way. Perhaps this seclusion may have been much exaggerated. It must be recollectcd that at the time he was said to be living this ascetic life, we have no reason to believe that he neglected the duties of society or his family, which was numerous, and, of course, would require constant attention. We have several examples of the union in the same character of fanaticism and philosophy. Priestley was a most amiable man and a great philosopher; but I think no person can acquit him entirely

not warranted by the Koran, the only record we have from Mohammed?

of fanaticism who reads his letters to Gibbon. His friends will say it was only zeal. This is but another name for fanaticism.

224. Wesley was a learned man and a good man, but his fancied visions and revelations put his fanaticism out of all doubt.

225. After circumstances had raised Mohamed to a considerable degree of eminence, it seems not unlikely that the accidental coincidence of name in the prophecy of the gospel of Barnabas (the gospel chiefly received by the Christians in his country) with his name, and that of the prophet Haggai, should have led him to believe that he was the person prophesied of, as Cyrus was of old by Isaiah. Nor do I think it unlikely that this should have caused in his character an union of philosophy and fanaticism. When he contemplated his success and future prospects, if he were (as cannot be doubted) a believer in the gospel of Barnabas, I can find no difficulty in supposing that he sincerely believed himself

to be the person referred to in the prophecy. Nor does it follow, in believing that he was a sent of God, that he should believe that he was any thing superior to a mere man, to the Messiah Cyrus, that was prophesied of by name in the book of Isaiah. A simple belief of this kind surely cannot by the consistent Christian be called fanaticism at all. Why should not he be prophesied of or foretold as well as Cyrus? Can any one read the account of the state of Christianity in his time, as truly described by Dr. White, and deny that the church of God was in as great want of a reformer as it was in the time of Cyrus of a deliverer?

226. I recollect no fanaticism or even religion which has not been either clogged with monstrous absurdities, or with extreme complication, or with both. But of all the established religions which I have ever read of, that of Mohamed is at once the most simple and the most philosophical, and in its original purity the least clogged with difficulties of any

kind. Nothing can be more simple than its creed or confession of faith—*God is God, and Mohamed is his prophet* (i. e. his messenger or preacher, resoul, sent of God). A man may believe every dogma of every religion in the world, provided he believe nothing contrary to the moral attributes of God, and yet he may be a Mohamedan. According to the Koran, he may practise almost any form and ceremony of other religions, provided he be only not an idolater, and yet be a Mohamedan.* This looks not like fanaticism alone. Fanaticism multiplies its creeds, narrows its gates, excludes as many as possible from the mansions only worthy of its superior excellence: but philosophy reduces them in number, and throws open its gates as wide as possible to all comers.

227. For all these reasons I am strongly inclined to think that in the character of this celebrated man may be found the union of fanaticism and phil-

* *Sic.*

osophy, which, under favourable auspices, produced the Mohamedan religion, the child not of preconcerted design, but of accident and circumstance: the origin of most religions.

228. I now beg my reader, if he be endowed with a particle of charity, to consider the character of Mohamed coolly and without prejudice; and if he do this, I am quite certain he will perceive that he has no ground to suppose that this great man considered himself inspired in any other manner than the learned and virtuous, however mistaken, John Wesley considered himself, or than as many individuals of the Society of Friends consider themselves to be every day, and that therefore he has no just ground to call him *an impostor*.

229. The Mohamedan religion has changed like the Christian, and as all religions have changed in long periods of time; for the Christians are no longer what they were five hundred years ago: they are not now employed in casting out devils and burning witches

and unhappy heretics. They no longer, with St. Athanasius, or at least very few of them, send all the heathen to hell for having been born in countries where the name of Jesus was never heard. These considerations, I hope, will induce them to make allowance for the intolerance of a race who, in consequence of bad governments, have fallen into a state of barbarism—a race who were once in a state of high refinement, when Europe was buried in darkness and ignorance. Christians I hope will recollect that intolerance begets intolerance, and though this may be excused in the ignorant barbarian, there is no excuse for it in those who claim the merit of civilization and philanthropy.

230. When I contemplate the monstrous absurdities believed by Christian sects, Methodists, Calvinists, Ranters, Jumpers, &c., &c., I am not much surprised that our priests should have trembled for their hierarchy, their tithes, &c., at the more rational system of Mohamed, and have had recourse to the falsities

and misrepresentations which I have exposed, to keep it from being fairly seen by their followers. My surprise is still less excited when I find in the nineteenth century a talented and learned man going over to the Mohamedan faith. The celebrated traveller Buckhardt, who was educated at the university of Cambridge, after the most careful inquiry and mature deliberation, turned Mohamedan, and amidst the circle of his Christian friends, died one. It appears that he was instructed in the Mohamedan faith, and converted to it by a learned effendi at Aleppo,¹ and that he there publicly professed it, and underwent a close examination into his faith and his knowledge of the Mohamedan tenets near Mecca, when he performed his pilgrimage to that place, in consequence of which he ever after claimed the title of Hadji.² His conversion seems to have been sincere, though generally, I think, concealed from his

¹ Buckhardt's Post. Travels, Pref. p. xli.

² Ibid. p. lviii.

Christian friends.

231. I have the pleasure to be acquainted with a gentleman who now (May, 1829), holds a responsible situation under the British government, but whose name I have not authority to give, who told me he was present with Buckhardt a very little time before he died, when he was gravely assured by him, that he really was a Mohamedan, and would die one. His anonymous biographer, in his posthumous work, gives an account of his death, but carefully avoids saying a word on the subject of his religion. He probably knew that if the truth came out, the sale of his book would be ruined by the calumnies of the priests. But one sentence escapes which is sufficient to confirm what I have said.¹ "He died at a quarter before twelve the same night, without a groan. *The funeral, AS HE DESIRED, WAS MOHAMEDAN,* conducted with all proper regard to the respectable rank which he

¹ Ibid p. lxxxix.

held in the eyes of the natives." If he were really a Mohamedan, it was natural for him to desire to be buried according to the Mohamedan law, and certainly if the Christians had not complied with the request, the government would have compelled them to do it. It was not likely that it should permit the Christians to defraud the Musselmans of the honour of such a proselyte. But it is evident that they left him without reserve under the care of the British Consul and in the hands of his countrymen, who had the fullest opportunity of exercising their abilities for his re-conversion. He seems to have had no interest to prejudice him in favour of Mohamedism, but on the contrary, he thought it necessary to conceal it from his Christian employers, from whom he received his support.

232. If his biographer may be credited, he appears to have been a man of the highest principle and most excellent character. Among other amiable traits recorded of this APOSTATE INFIDEL,

as he will be called, he reduced himself to absolute and complete poverty, by giving up his patrimonial inheritance, £1000, for the maintenance of his mother.

233. The confidence which the Mohamedans have always shewn in the justice of their own cause, as close examination must convince any one, is very remarkable. I refer my reader to the case detailed above of the Mogul in India,—of the mode in which they have always tolerated the Christian religion in Greece and the other countries which they conquered; and, lastly, to the fact taking place at this time, that the Grand Seignior and the Pasha of Egypt have sent great numbers of their young men to be educated in London and Paris without exhibiting any fear of their principles of religion being shaken.

234. I have been told, by very good authority, that the son of Ibrahim, the grandchild and heir of the present Pasha of Egypt, is shortly coming to Paris for education.

235. A young Egyptian, who has been sent to this country for his education by the Pasha of Egypt, and is evidently meant for a prime minister of that country, with whom I have the pleasure to be acquainted, told me that a gentleman had been talking to him on the subject of his religion, telling him that he would certainly be damned if he did not change it and become Christian; and he asked me my opinion -to which I replied, "I can give no opinion till I know something about the religion which you profess. Does your religion teach you to adore one God with profound reverence and resignation to his divine will; to expect a state of happiness in a future life if you conduct yourself well in this? Does it teach you to be just in all your dealings; to do to others as you would wish others to do to you?" He replied, "All these things it teaches." "Then," I rejoined, "remain in the religion of your ancestors. Be assured that God will never damn you *for an opinion* —*a point of faith*, which must always be

a matter of necessity, not of choice; for a man cannot choose to believe or not to believe; therefore faith can never be a subject of merit, or proper object of punishment or reward. I think you have too much sense ever to believe that a doctrine contrary to the moral attributes of God, like the doctrine of damnation, which these gentlemen teach, can be true. For, as one of our most eminent divines, the Rev. Dr. Sykes, has said, nothing can be believed contrary to the moral attributes of God, even though it were enforced by miracles themselves. No person, whose mind has not been corrupted by education, can doubt the truth of the Hindoo doctrine, that God is equally present with the pious Jew in the synagogue, the Christian in the church, the Mohamedan in the mosque, and the Brahmin in the temple.* Those who wish you to enter upon the

* Hence also Mohammed's injunction of repelling the violence of men to save "cloisters and churches and synagogues, and all places of worship, wherein the name of God is mentioned much, from being demolished." (Koran, S. 22. 40.)

question of the truth of Christianity, I have no doubt, are actuated by the best intentions, but they have very little knowledge of the subject on which they advise you. When they have read the essays of two or three writers on the Christian side, they fancy that they understand the question, without ever reading the works which have been written against it, so that, in fact, they are less likely to understand it than if they had not read at all.—In addition to this, what will they make of the book of Genesis, respecting the translation of which no two sects, or scarcely any two persons, have ever agreed, and which is essential to their religion? If you mean to understand the question of the truth of the Christian religion, you must first acquire a considerable knowledge of Latin, Greek, and, above all, of Hebrew, without some knowledge of the last of which it is ridiculous to pretend yourself to form an opinion. After you have acquired this you must prepare yourself for many hours' daily study, for several

years together, before you can be master of the subject. If you are not prepared for all this, be assured that you have not the least chance of being able to form a correct opinion *upon the ground of evidence*. Therefore, I repeat, if you feel that this probation is not in your power, place your reliance on the goodness and justice of your Creator who will never act unjustly or require any thing unreasonable, and remain content with the religion of your ancestors."

236. My amiable young friend told me he was quite satisfied that my advice was good, and I have no doubt that he will follow it; and I flatter myself with the hope, that some day as prime minister under the command of Ibrahim, he will restore his interesting country to the prosperity which it formerly enjoyed under its caliphs.

237. Although this anecdote may be said not to relate to Mohamed, I have thought that I could not do better than conclude my Essay by making known the fact so full of promise for the in-

habitants of the oriental countries, that the present great sovereigns of Constantinople and Egypt are sending their young men to the West for education, a circumstance which opens a most flattering prospect of improvement to the countries which they govern, and must give great pleasure to every liberal and philanthropic mind.

FINIS.

APPENDIX I.

IN the Classical Journal, Vol. XXXVII. p. 227, is the following passage:

"The reply of the Mufti was as follows--'That the utterance of opinions contrary to Mohamedanism was not necessarily to be regarded as blasphemy, or as of the nature of a crime: that since the Sultan had permitted to his Christian subjects, without any qualification, the free profession of their religious belief, they were no more blameable in promulgating that belief through the medium of the press, than through that of the pulpit: finally, that it was not diversity of opinion, but the commission of public scandal, that rendered individuals obnoxious to the penalties of the law.'"

* On this let me quote from the Mohammedan Common Law, the *Hidaya*: "If a *Zimme** [Dhimmi] refuse to pay capitation tax, or murder a *Mussulman*, or blaspheme the prophet, or commit whoredom with a *Muslima* [Mussulman woman], yet his contract of subjection is not dissolved; because the thing in virtue of which the destruction of *Zimmees* [Dhimmis] is suspended is *submitting* to capitation-tax, not the actual *payment* thereof; and the submission to

* Non-Moslem subject.

The above is the deliberate opinion, given at Constantinople, in the seventeenth century, by the highest Doctor of the Mohamedan law—the head Mufti, who answers to our Lord Chancellor. Let this be contrasted with the laws which existed a very few years ago in England, and particularly in Ireland, against Papists and Popish recusants; * and I am quite certain that every candid person must grant the palm of liberality to the barbarian Turk. Here we see the same system of toleration and the same absence of all fear of discussion exhibited in Constantinople as we have before seen exhibited in India by the Mogul.—The author dis-

it still continues. . . . The argument of our doctors is that the blasphemy in question is merely an act of *infidelity* proceeding from an infidel; and as his *infidelity* was no obstruction to the contract of subjection at the time of making it, this supervenient act of infidelity does not cancel it." (Charles Hamilton's edn. vol. ii. p. 221.)

* Mr. Ewald, treating of the English law on blasphemy, writes: "Blasphemy is the denying the existence of God or His Providence. Contumelious reproach of our Saviour are offences punishable at Common Law; and by a statute of King James I., the profanely or jestingly using the name of God, our Saviour, or the Holy Trinity, in any stage play, is punishable by a fine of £10. A profane scoffing at the Holy Scriptures is also blasphemy. It is

covered the above passage after the Essay was printed.

punishable by fine, imprisonment, or corporal punishment." (Alex Charles Ewald, F.S.A., *Our Constitution: an Epitome of Our Chief Laws and System of Government*, p. 81. London 1867.)

"Not much more than a hundred and fifty years ago, a boy named Thomas Aikenhead, who among some of his friends expressed an opinion that Mohammed was a greater legislator and propagated a more rational religion than Jesus Christ—was hung in Scotland for blasphemy. (James Creagh, *Armenians, Koords, and Turks*, vol. i., p. 106. London 1880.)

APPENDIX II.

Koranic notices of events connected with the lives of Mary, John, and Jesus.

Verily, God has chosen Adam,
Birth and Noah, and the people of
of Abraham, and the people of
Mary Amran, above all the world;
—the one of them the posterity
of the other; and God is Hearing,
Knowing.

When a woman of [the family of] Amran said, My Lord! verily, I have vowed to Thee what is in my womb,¹ to be dedicated [to Thee]; so accept [it] from me; verily, Thou art the Hearer, the Knower.

And when she had brought it forth, she said, My Lord! verily I have brought it forth a female;—and God best knew what she had brought forth, and the male is not like the female;—and verily I have named her Mary, and verily I commend her to Thee, and [also] her offspring, from the accursed Satan.

Then her Lord accepted her with goodly acceptance, and made her grow

¹ *Lit.*, belly.

up with goodly growth; and Zachariah had charge of her.

Her piety So oft as Zachariah went into the chamber to her, [and] found beside her a provision, he said, O Mary! whence hast thou this? She said, It is from God; verily, God provides for whom He pleases without count.

Zachariah's prayer There prayed Zachariah to his Lord, saying, My Lord! grant me—even me—from before Thee a good offspring; verily, Thou art the Hearer of prayer.¹

When he called upon his Lord with secret calling, saying, My Lord! verily my bones are weakened, and [my] head flares with hoariness, and, my Lord! I have never been unfortunate in [my] prayers to Thee; and, verily, I fear my heirs after me, for my wife is barren; so grant me from before Thee a successor, who may be my heir, and the heir of the family of Jacob; and make him, my Lord! well-pleasing [to Thee].²

Then the angels called to him, as he stood praying in the chamber, [saying,] God gives Thee the glad tidings of [a son named] John, to confirm a word

¹ S. 3. 33-8.

² S. 19. 3-6.

from God, and an honourable and a chaste person, and a prophet from among the righteous.¹ . . . We never made any his equal before.²

He said, My Lord! how shall I have a boy [now] when my wife is barren, and I have reached through old age to be a decrepit. He said, Thus [shall it be]. Thy Lord says, It is easy with Me,³ for I created thee before when thou wast nothing.⁴

He said, My Lord! give me a sign.⁵ [God] said, Thy sign shall be that thou shalt not speak to men for three days unless by signs; and remember thy Lord much, and glorify [Him] at even and at morn.⁶

So We answered him, and granted him John, and made his wife right for him;⁷ verily these hastened emulously in benevolent deeds, and called upon Us with longing and with fear, and humbled themselves before Us.⁸

[And We said,] O John! receive the book with a resolution [to keep it]. And We gave him judgment when yet a child, and tenderness from Us, and purity; and he was pious, and good to his parents, and was not a rebellious tyrant.

¹S. 3. 39.

²S. 19. 7.

And peace upon him the day he was born, and the day he died, and the day he shall be raised up alive!¹

Immaculate Mary And Mary the daughter of Amran who preserved her chastity, and into whom We breathed of Our spirit,² and who believed in the words of her Lord and His books, and was one of the devout;³

Retires and her vision When she went aside from her people to a place towards [and took a screen herself] from them; and We sent Our Spirit to her, and he appeared to her [as in a dream] a perfect man. She said, I betake me from thee to the Merciful [God], if thou dost fear [Him]! He said, I am only a messenger of thy Lord.
.....⁴

O Mary! verily, God has chosen thee, and has purified thee, and has chosen

¹ It will be quite in keeping with My law of procreation. ⁴S. 19. 8, 9.

²Or, commandment.

⁶S. 3. 41.

³Her defect was removed.

⁸S. 21. 90.

¹S. 19. 11-5.

²And in whose womb God perfected a child. This is the merest process in the formation of every child. Cf. S. 32. 7-9.

⁵S. 66. 12.

⁴S. 9. 16-9.

thee above the women of all the world.¹

To be O Mary ! verily, God gives
 the thee the glad tidings by a
 mother word from Him [of one] whose
 of Jesus name shall be Messiah Jesus the
 son of Mary, honourable in this
 world and the hereafter, and one
 of those who approach near [to God].²
 And he shall speak to men [about their
 duties] in the cradle³ and when advanced in
 years,⁴ and shall be one of the righteous.
 She said, My Lord ! How shall I have a
 son when no man has touched me?⁵ He
 said, Thus God creates what He
 pleases. When He decrees an
 affair, He only says of it, Be ;
 and it Is.⁶

In Thy Lord says, It is easy
 course with Me ; and We will make him a
 of time sign⁷ to mankind, and a mercy from
 Us ; and it is a matter decreed.⁸

Who And He will teach him the
 will book and wisdom, and the
 grow up Torah, and the Evangel, and
 to be a [he shall be] an apostle to the
 prophet children of Israel, [saying,] Now
 have I come to you with a sign
 from your Lord : I resolve to

¹S. 3. 42, 43.

²One of the most highly exalted.

³When yet a mere boy in his teens.

make of you, [who are] of the dust¹

⁴Mohammedan traditions hold that Jesus attained to a hoary old age.

⁵This piece of glad tidings was given to her while she was still unmarried.

⁶The meaning of these and such other verses must be taken to be largely figurative: for, as a learned writer observes, whatever they mean we cannot understand them to say that God speaks with a human voice. "A study of the verses," continues the writer I am quoting, "will soon show that they do not, in any sense imply that God does not employ *means* in creation. The idea that they both [S. 3. 47 and S. 54. 49, 53] convey is that in the act of creation there is nothing difficult to God, however wonderful it may appear to man. All that is necessary for the carrying out of God's will in regard to anything which He creates, is that He says the word (that is, purposes it in his own mind) and immediately His purpose begins to be accomplished, and the work is carried out to its ultimate completion by virtue and in consequence of this single command." (Rev. W. R. W. Gardner, *The Doctrine of Man*, p. 6. Madras, 1913.)

⁷The triumph of faith and the discomfiture of infidelity are alike referred to in the Koran as signs of God. Cf. S. 12. 7.

⁸S. 19. 21.

¹Of the earth, earth-bound. Cf. S. 7. 17^r; S. 25. 44

And talk in parables like the form of a bird [to soar high], and I will breathe [a spirit] into the same, and it shall become a [high-soaring] bird¹ by the permission of God; and I will heal the blind and the leprosous,² and I will give life to the dead,³ by the permission of God; and I will tell you what it is ye eat⁴ and what it is ye treasure up in your houses.⁵ Verily, in [all] that is a sign to you, if ye believe. And [I come] to confirm what has been before me of the Torah, and I will allow you part of what was forbidden you, and I come to you with an injunction from your Lord; so fear God, and obey me.

Verily, God is my Lord and your Lord; so serve Him; this is the straight path.⁶

Afterwards she conceived him, and retired with him to a distant place. And the throes came upon her by the trunk

¹ A being with lofty thoughts.

² In a spiritual sense. Cf. S. 10.57; S. 41.44.

³ Cf. S. 8.24; S. 6.123.

⁴ It is nothing but fire (S. 2.174), being yourselves devourers of the forbidden (S. 5.42.).

⁵ It is with what your foreheads and your sides and backs shall be branded in hell. (S. 9.35.)

⁶ S. 3.48-51.

of a palm tree; she cried, O that I were dead before this and became a thing forgotten, forgotten quite! Accompanied by pains of child-birth a thing forgotten, forgotten quite! And one called to her from beneath her, [saying,] Grieve not thou; now has thy Lord placed a streamlet beneath thee; and shake towards thee the trunk of the palm tree; it will drop upon thee fresh ripe dates. So eat and drink and cheer [thine] eye; and if thou shouldst see any man, then say thou, Verily I have vowed a fast to the Merciful [God], and I will not speak to-day with any man.

When grown up is condemned of the priests as an innovator

Afterwards she came with him to her people, carrying him [on a beast];¹ they said, O Mary! thou hast brought forth one—an inventer [of lies]. O sister of Aaron!² thy father was not a bad man, nor was thy mother a transgressor [of the Law]. Then she pointed to him [to speak to him]; they said, How should we [the elders of the people] speak to him who [but yesterday] was an infant in the cradle? [Whereupon

¹ For this meaning of the word, cf. S. 9. 92.

² O daughter of the Levitical race of priests!

Declares
his
mission

Jesus] said, Verily, I am a servant of God: He has given me the book and has made me a prophet, and has made me blessed wherever I be, and has enjoined me prayer and purity as long as I live, and to be good to my mother,¹ and has not made me a wicked tyrant. And peace upon me the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I shall be raised up alive!

That was Jesus the son of Mary, [and this is] the word of truth concerning which they are in doubt.

It is not for God that He should take [to Himself] a son. Glory be to Him [and far be it from Him]! When He decrees an affair, He only says of it, Be; and it Is.

And, verily, God is my Lord and your Lord; so serve Him: this is the straight way.²

When God said, O Jesus son Favoured of Mary! remember My favour of God upon thee and upon thy mother, when I strengthened thee with the holy Spirit; thou didst speak to men

¹ His father Joseph must not have been living then.

²S. 19. 22-36.

in the cradle, and when advanced in years; and when I taught thee the book and judgment, and the Torah and the Evangel; and when thou didst resolve to make those of the dust like the form of [a high-soaring] bird by My permission, and thou didst breathe [a spirit] into the same, that it might become a [high-soaring] bird by My permission; and thou didst heal the blind, and the leperous, by My permission; and when thou didst bring forth the dead by My permission; and when I withheld the children of Israel from [injuring] thee, when thou didst come to them with evident injunctions, and those who believed not among them said, This is nothing but plain magic!

And when I revealed to the apostles [of Jesus, saying,] Believe in Me and in My apostle; they said, We believe; and bear thou witness that we are Muslims.

When the apostles said, O Jesus, son of Mary! will thy Lord deign send down [continually] upon us provision from heaven? He said, Fear God, if ye be believers.

They said, We desire to eat thereof, that our hearts may rest at ease, and that we may know that thou hast told us the truth, and that we may be witnesses thereof.

His
prayer
for the
daily
bread

Jesus son of Mary, said, O God our Lord! send down upon us provision from heaven to be to us continual, to the first of us, and to the last of us, and as a sign from Thee; and provide us, for Thou art the best of providers.

God said, Even so will I send it down to you, but whoso of you shall believe not after [this], verily I will torment him with a torment wherewith I have not tormented any one in all the world.¹

His apostles And when Jesus perceived their unbelief, he said, Who are my helpers towards God? the apostles said, We are the helpers of God: we believe in God, and bear thou witness that we are Muslims. Our Lord! we believe in what Thou hast sent down, and we follow the apostle; so write us down with those who bear witness [to the truth].

His life
attempted

But they plotted [against him], and God plotted too, and God is the best of those who can plot.²

¹ S. 5. 110-15.

² S. 3. 52-4.

When God said, O Jesus ! verily, I will take thee away, and will take thee up unto Me, and I will keep thee clear of those who believe not, and will place those who follow thee above those who believe not, until the day of resurrection. Then to Me shall ye [all] return, and I will judge between you concerning that wherein ye disagree. And as to those who believe not, I will torment them with a severe torment in this world and the hereafter, and they shall have no helpers [against Me].—But as to those who believe and do the right deeds, He will pay them their reward ; but God loves not the wrongdoers.¹

For they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it appeared [so] to them ; and verily those who disagreed [among themselves] concerning him were in doubt as to this : they have no knowledge thereof except that they follow an opinion ; yet they did not kill him, for sure ; but God took him up unto Himself ; and God is Mighty, Wise. And there is not one of the people of the book but believes in it [only] before his death ; but on the day of resurrection he

¹ S. 3. 55-7.

shall be a witness against them.¹

Finds And We made the son of
an Mary and his mother a sign,
asylum and We gave them a refuge on
with springs. an elevated plain, abounding in
plants and fruit, and running

His plea And when God shall say, O
before Jesus son of Mary, What! didst
God thou say to men, Take me and
my mother for two gods beside
God? he shall say, Glory be
to Thee! it is not for me to say what
I have no right to; if I had said it,
Thou wouldest have known it: Thou
knowest what is in me, but I know not
what is in Thee; verily, Thou art the
knower of secrets. I spoke not to them
but what Thou didst bid me, [namely,]
Serve God my Lord and your Lord; and
I was a witness against them so long as
I stayed amongst them, but since Thou
hast taken me away, Thou hast been the
watcher over them; and Thou art witness
over all things. If Thou torment them,
verily they are Thy servants; and if
Thou pardon them, verily Thou art the
Mighty, the Wise.

¹ S. 4. 157-9.

² S. 23. 50.

God will say, This is the day when their truth shall profit the truthful; for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow, to dwell therein for ever and evermore. God shall be well pleased with them, and they shall be well pleased with Him. That is the great bliss.

God's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and what is in them, and He is potent over all things.¹

¹ S. 5. 116-20.

APPENDIX III.

Koranic references to Christians.

Revela- Verily, We revealed the Torah,
tion wherein is guidance and light;
of the by it did the prophets who ac-
Torah cepted Islam judge those who
 were Jews; and the Rabboni
 and priests also [judged] by what
they were made to preserve of the book of
God, and of which they were witnesses.
So fear not men, but fear Me; and
barter not My injunctions for a mean
price; and whoso judges not by what
God has sent down, these are the un-
godly. . . .

Of the And We followed up their foot-
Evangel steps with Jesus, the son of Mary, to
 confirm what was before him of the
 Torah; and We gave him the
 Evangel, wherein is guidance
 and light, and a confirmation
 of what was before it of the
Torah, and a guidance and an admoni-
tion to those who fear [to do wrong].

And let the people of the Evangel
judge by what God has revealed therein;
and whoso judges not by what God has
revealed, these are the wicked.

Of the Koran And We have revealed to thee [Mohammed] the book with truth, as a confirmation of what was before it of the book, and as a safe-guard for the same. So judge thou between them by what God has revealed, and follow not their lusts against [the knowledge] which has come to thee of the truth.

A law for each For every one of you have We made a law and an open way ;--and if God had pleased, He would surely have made you one people, but [He has done otherwise], that He might try you in what He has given you [respectively]. Strive then to excel each other in benevolent deeds : to God is your return altogether, and then will He inform you of that concerning which ye disagree.¹

The covenant of the Israelites And God accepted the covenant of the children of Israel, . . . and God said, Verily, I am with you. If ye be steadfast in prayer, and give alms, and believe in My apostles, and assist them, and lend to God a goodly loan,² I will surely put away from you your troubles, and I will surely make you enter into gardens beneath which rivers

¹S. 5, 44, 46-48.

²Do him a good service.

flow; but whoso among you believes not after this, he has erred from the level way. . . . They pervert the words from their places, and have forgotten part of what they were reminded. . . . And

of those who say, Verily we are Christians, We received their covenant; but they too have forgotten part of what they were reminded. . . .

O people of the book! now is Our apostle come to you to clear up to you much of what ye had hidden of the book, and to pass over much. Now has a light and a clear book come to you from God;

God guides thereby him who follows His pleasure to the ways of peace, and brings them out of darkness into light by His pleasure, and He guides them into the straight path.¹

And We put into the hearts of those who followed [Jesus] kindness and compassion; but monasticism, they instituted it themselves—We did not prescribe it to them—only as seeking the good-will of God; yet they observed it not with its due observance; but We gave to those of them who believed their

Kindness
and
compas-
sion,
not
monas-
ticism,
parts of
Chris-

reward; but many of them are wicked doers.¹

Nor sin and wrong-doing Say thou, O people of the book! do ye disavow us only for that we believe in God, and what has been revealed to us, and what has been revealed before [us], and for that most of you are wicked doers?

And thou shalt see many of them hastening to sin and enmity, and eating things forbidden. Surely evil is what they do.

[Their] Rabboni and priests do not forbid them from their speaking of sinful things and their eating of things forbidden. Surely evil is what they do. . . .

An exhortation But if the people of the book believe, and fear [to do wrong], We will surely put away from them their troubles, and We will surely make them enter into gardens of delight; and if they kept fast to the Torah and the Evangel, and what has been revealed to them from their Lord, they shall surely eat [of good things] from above them and from beneath their feet. Among them

¹S. 57. 27.

there are right-minded people; but many of them, evil is what they do! . . .

Say thou, O people of the book! ye have nothing to stand on, unless ye stand fast by the Torah and the Evangel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord;—and what has been revealed to thee [Mohammed] from thy Lord will surely increase many of them in rebellion and unbelief; so fret not thyself for the ungodly people.

Verily, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Sabæans, and the Christians—whoso believes in God and the last day, and does right—there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.¹

Say thou, O people of the book! be not extravagant in your religion [by speaking] beside the truth, and follow not the lusts of a people who erred before, and who led astray many, and erred from the level way.²

And they say, God has taken [to Himself] a son. Glory to Him! Nay, His is what is in the heavens and the earth: all are devoted to Him.

Originator of the heavens and the earth! when He decides an affair, He only says of it, Be; and it Is.³

¹S 5. 59, 62, 63, 65, 66, 68, 69.

O ye people! now has the apostle come to you with truth from your Lord; so believe; [it will be] better for you; and if ye believe not, verily God's is what is in the heavens and the earth; and God is Knowing, Wise.

O people of the book! be not extravagant in your religion, nor say of God [any other] than the truth. The Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, is only an apostle of God and [a fulfilment of] His word which He vouchsafed to Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in God and His apostles, and say not, Three! Forbear [this]; it will be better for you. God is only one God! Glory be to Him [and far be it from Him] that He should have a son! His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. And God is guardian enough.¹

The Messiah does by no means disdain to be a servant to God, nor the angels who approach near [to His Presence]. And whoso despairs His service, and is swelled with pride, He will gather them all together to Himself.²

²S. 5. 77.

³S. 2. 116, 117.

¹S. 4. 170, 171.

²S. 4. 172.

They do certainly misbelieve who say, Verily God is the Messiah the son of Mary; whereas the Messiah said, O children of Israel! serve God my Lord and your Lord. . . . They do certainly misbelieve who say, Verily God is the third of three; for there is no God but one God; and if they desist not from what they say, a painful torment shall surely touch those who misbelieve among them. Will they not then turn towards God and ask pardon of Him? for God is Forgiving, Compassionate.

The Messiah, son of Mary, is no more than an apostle; [other] apostles have already passed before him, and his mother was a truthful woman; they did both eat food.¹

[Jesus] was no other than a servant [of Ours] whom We we favoured; and We made him an example to the children of Israel.

And if We pleased, We could certainly have produced angels out of you to succeed [you] in the earth. . . .

And when Jesus came with evident injunctions, he said, I come to you with wisdom, and to explain to you part of that wherein ye disagree. So fear God, and obey me. Verily, God! He is my

¹S. 5. 72-5.

Lord and your Lord ; so serve Him. This is the straight way.

But the confederated [sects] disputed among themselves. And woe to those who do wrong, because of the torment of a painful day !¹

The true creed And they say, Become ye Jews or Christians that ye may be guided [aright]. Say thou, Nay ! but the creed of Abraham, a Hanif, who was not of those who joined [other gods with God].

Say ye, We believe in God, and what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and what was given to the [other] prophets from their Lord,—we make no distinction between any of them,—and to Him we submit.

Then if they believe like to what ye believe, they are guided [aright]; but if they turn back, then are they only in a schism; and God suffices thee against them, and He is the Hearer, the Knower.

[That is] the baptism of God ; and who is better than God at baptizing ? and Him we serve.

Say thou, Will ye dispute with us

¹S. 43. 59, 60, 63-5.

concerning God, when He is our Lord your Lord?—and we have our works, and ye have your works, and we are solely His.

Jews and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob
and the tribes were Jews or
Chris- Christians? Say thou, What ! are
tians ye more knowing, or God ? and
who does a greater wrong than
he who hides the testimony he has from
God ? but God is not unmindful of what
ye do.

That is a people who have passed away: they have what they have earned, and ye shall have what ye earn, and ye shall not be questioned as to what they did.¹

Their exclusiveness And they say, None shall enter paradise except such as are Jews or Christians. That is their fancy. Say thou, Bring your proofs, if ye speak the truth.

Yea, whoso submits himself to God, and is a benefactor, he shall have his reward with his Lord, and there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.

And the Jews say, The Christians stand on nothing; and the Christians

¹S. 2. 135-41.

say, The Jews stand on nothing. Yet they read the [same] book. Thus say those who do not know [the book], like as these say. But God shall judge between them on the day of resurrection concerning that wherein they [now] disagree.¹

And there is of the people of the book to whom if thou trust a treasure, he will restore it to thee; and there is of them to whom if thou trust a dinar, he will not restore it to thee, except so long as thou standest over him. That is for that they say, There is no obligation upon us in respect to the gentiles; but they tell a lie against God knowingly.

Yea, whoso fulfils his covenant, and fears [to do wrong], verily, God loves those who fear [to do wrong].

Verily, those who barter the covenant of God and their oaths for a little price, these shall have no portion in the hereafter, nor shall God speak to them, nor shall He look upon them on the day of resurrection, nor shall He purify them; but for them shall be a painful torment.

And verily there is a party of them who torture the book with their tongues, that ye may take it to be from the

¹ S. 2. 111-3.

book; but it is not from the book. And they say, It is from God; but it is not from God; and they tell a lie against God knowingly.

Priest-craft It is not right for man, that God should give him the book and wisdom and prophecy, and that then he should say to men, Be ye servants of mine rather than of God; but rather that he should say, Be ye perfect in knowledge and in works,¹ for that ye teach the book and for that ye study.

Nor would He bid you take the angels and the prophets for lords. Will He bid you misbelieve after that ye have been Muslims?²

The Jews say, Ezra is the son of God; and the Christians say, The Messiah is the son of God. That is their saying with their mouths: they imitate the saying of those who believed not before. God confound them! How they are turned aside [from the truth]!

They take their priests and their monks for lords rather than God, and the Messiah the son of Mary; but they are only commanded to serve one God. There is no God but He! Glory be to Him [and far be He] from what they

¹ *Lit.*, Rabboni.

² S. 3. 75-80.

the last day, and bid what is just and forbid what is wrong, and hasten emulously in benevolent deeds; and these are of the righteous.

And what they do of good
Their reward shall by no means be ungratefully denied, for God well knows the pious.¹

And whoso obeys God and the apostle, these shall be with those to whom God has been gracious, of the prophets, and the truthful, and the martyrs, and the righteous; and excellent a company these. That is grace from God; and God is knowing enough.²

An exhortation Do they seek any other religion than God's, when to Him submits whoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or perforce, and to Him shall they be brought back?

Say thou, We believe in God, and what has been sent down to us, and what has been sent down to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and the [other] prophets from their Lord: we make no distinction between any of them, and we submit to Him [alone].

¹ S. 3: 113-15. ² S.

And whoso seeks any other religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him, and in the hereafter he shall be of those who lose.

How shall God guide a people who disbelieve after they have believed and borne witness that the apostle was true, and the evidences had come to them? for God guides not the wrong-doing people.¹

It shall not be according to your wishes, nor according to the wishes of the people of the book : whoso does evil shall be rewarded for it, and shall find for himself no patron or helper against God. And whoso does right deeds, whether male or female, and is a believer ; these shall enter the garden, and they shall not be wronged [so much as] the split of a date-stone.

And who is better in religion than he who submits himself to God, and is a benefactor, and follows the creed of Abraham, as a Hanif²? for God took Abraham for a friend.³

An appeal Say thou, O people of the book ! come to an equitable word between us and you—that we will not serve any except God, nor join anything with Him, nor

¹ S. 3. 83-6.

² Or, one rightly inclined.

³ S. 4. 123-5.

take each other for lords beside God. But if they turn back, then say ye, Bear witness that we are Muslims.

O people of the book! why wrangle ye concerning Abraham, when the Torah and the Evangel were not sent down until after him? Have ye than no sense?

Here ye are they who wrangle concerning that which ye have no knowledge of; but why wrangle ye concerning that which ye have no knowledge of? And God knows, and ye do not know.

Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Hanif, a Muslim; and he was not of those who joined [others with God].

Verily, the people most worthy of Abraham are those who follow him and this prophet, and those who believe; and God is the patron of the faithful.

A party of the people of the book would fain lead you astray, but they only lead themselves astray, and do not perceive.

O people of the book! why do ye not believe in the signs of God when ye are witnesses [thereof]?

O people of the book! why clothe ye the truth with vanity, and hide the truth while ye know?

Say thou, O people of the book ! why believe ye not in the signs of God when God is witness of what ye do?

Say thou, O people of the book ! why hinder ye him from the way of God who believes, seeking to make it crooked, while ye are witnesses [of its truth]? But God is not unmindful of what ye do.¹

But the Jews will not be pleased with thee, nor the Christians, until thou follow their creed. Say thou, Verily the guidance of God —that is the guidance. And surely if thou follow their lusts after the knowledge that has come to thee, thou shalt not have from God a patron or helper.²

And We have already enjoined those who have been given the book before you, and yourselves, that ye fear God. But if ye believe not,³ verily God's is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth; and God is Independent, Glorified. . . . If He please! He can take you away, ye people, and bring others [in your place]; for God is potent for that.⁴

¹ S. 3. 98, 99.

² S. 2. 120.

³ God has no need of you.

⁴ S. 4. 131, 133.

APPENDIX IV.

*The Charter granted by Mohammed to the
monks of the Monastery of St. Catharine,
near Mount Sinai, and to Christians in
general.*

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Granted by Mohammed Apostle of God, to the monks of Mount. Sinai, and to Christians in general.

Verily God is the High, the Grand. From Him have come all the prophets; and there remains no record of injustice against God. Through the gifts that are given to men, Mohammed, son of Abdullah and Apostle of God, grants the present instrument to all those that are his national people, and of his religion, as a secure and positive promise to be accomplished to the Christian people and their relations, whoever they are, the noble or the vulgar, the honourable or otherwise, saying thus :

I. Whoever of my people shall presume to break my promise and oath which is contained in this present agreement, destroys the promise of God, acts contrary to the oath and will be a resister of the faith [which God forbid !]

for .thus he becomes worthy of the curse, whether he be the king himself or a man in the street, or whatever he may be.

II. That whenever any of the monks in his travels shall happen to settle on any mountain, hill, village or in any other habitable place, on the sea or in the desert, in a convent, church, or house of prayer, I shall be in the midst of them, as the preserver and protector of them, their goods and effects, with my soul, aid and protection, jointly with all my people, because they are a part of my own people and an honour to me.

III. I do hereby command all officers not to require any poll-tax from them nor any other tribute, because they shall not be forced to anything of the kind.

IV. None shall have the right to change their judges or governors, and they shall remain in their offices without being deposed.

V. None shall molest them when they are travelling on the road.

VI. No one shall have the right to deprive them of their churches.

VII. Whoso of my people shall annul any of these my decrees, let him know positively that he annuls the ordinance of God.

APPENDIX IV.

VIII. Neither shall their judges, governors, monks, servants, disciples, or any one depending on them, be liable to pay any poll-tax, or subjected to other vexations, because I shall be their protector, wherever they be, on land or sea, in the east, west, north, or south; because both they and all that belong to them are included in this my promissory oath and patent.

IX. And of those that live quietly and solitary upon the mountains, the Moslems shall exact neither poll-tax nor tithes from their incomes, neither shall any Moslem partake of what they have for they labour only to maintain themselves.

X. Whenever there is plenty of harvest, the inhabitants shall be obliged, out of every bushel, to give them a certain measure.

XI. Neither in time of war shall they take them out of their seclusion, nor compel them to go to the wars, nor shall they require of them any poll-tax.

XII. Those Christians who are inhabitants, and with their riches and traffic are able to pay the poll-tax, shall pay no more than what shall be reasonable.

XIII. Excepting this, they shall not

be required to pay anything, according to the express word of God.

XIV. If a Christian woman happens to marry a Moslem, the Moslem shall not cross the inclination of his wife to keep her from her chapel and prayers and the practice of her religion.

XV. That no one shall hinder them from repairing their churches. If the Christians shall stand in need of assistance for the repair of churches, or monasteries, or in any other matter pertaining to their religion, the Moslems shall assist them.

XVI. Whoever acts contrary to this my grant, or gives credit to anything contrary to it, becomes truly an apostate from God and His apostle, because this protection I grant them according to this promise.

XVII. No one shall bear arms against them, but, on the contrary, the Moslems shall wage war for them. Should the Moslems be engaged in hostilities with outside Christians, no Christian resident among them shall be treated with contempt on account of his creed.

XVIII. And by this I ordain that none of my people shall presume to do or act contrary to this promise until the end of time. Any Moslem acting

contrary to it shall be deemed recalcitrant to God and His apostle.¹

¹ Mr. John Davenport also quotes the above in his *Apology*, with but slight variation, from *A Description of the East and other Countries*, by Richard Pococke, Bishop of Meath; vol. i, p. 268. Edn. 1743. This document bears the signatures of 16 Companions of the Prophet as witnesses, and was written by Ali, the Prophet marking it with his own Seal at the Mosque (Medinah), on the 3rd day of Moharram. A. H. 2.

APPENDIX V.

Christian references to Mohammed.

A complete history of the opinions that have been held by Christians about Mohammed and Mohammedanism would not be an uninstructive chapter, however melancholy, in the history of the human mind. To glance for a moment at a few of them.

During the first few centuries of Mohammedanism, Christendom could not afford to criticise or explain; it could only tremble and obey. But when the Saracens had received their first check in the heart of France, the nations which had been flying before them faced round, as a herd of cows will sometimes do when the single dog that has put them to flight is called off; and though they did not yet venture to fight, they could at least calumniate their retreating foe. Drances-like, they could manufacture calumnies and victories at pleasure :—

‘ Quæ tuto tibi magna volant; dum distincte hostem
Agger murorum, nec innundant sanguine fossæ.’

The disastrous retreat of Charles the Great through Roncesvalles, and the

slaughter of his rear-guard by the Gascons, is turned by Romance-mongers and Troubadours into a signal victory of his over the Saracens; Charles, who never went beyond Pannonia, is credited, in the following century, with a successful Crusade to the Holy Sepulchre, and even with the sack of Babylon! The age of Christian chivalry had not yet come, and was not to come for two hundred years.

In the romance of 'Turpin,' quoted by Renan, Mohammed, the fanatical destroyer of all idolatry, is turned himself into an idol of gold, and, under the name of Mawmet, is reported to be the object of worship at Cadiz; and this not even Charles the Great, Charles the Iconoclast, the destroyer of the Irman-sul, in his own native Germany, would venture to attack from fear of the legion of demons which guarded it. In the song of Roland, the national Epic of France, referring to the same events, Mohammed appears with the chief of the Pagan Gods on the one side of him and the chief of the Devils on the other; a curious anticipation, perhaps, of the view of Satanic inspiration taken by Sir William Muir. Marsilles, Khalif of Cordova, is supposed to worship him as a god, and his favourite form of adjuration is made to be 'By Jupiter, by Mohammed,

and by Apollyon,'—strange metamorphosis and strange collocation! Human sacrifices are offered to him, if nowhere else indeed, in the imagination and assertions of Christian writers of the tenth and eleventh centuries, under the various names of Bafum, or Maphomet, or Mawmet; and in the same spirit Malaterra, in his 'History of Sicily,' describes that island as being, when under Saracenic rule, 'a land wholly given to idolatry,'¹ and the expedition of the Norman Roger Guiscard is characterised as a crusade against idol worship. Which people were the greater idolaters, any candid reader of the Italian annalists of this time, collected by Muratori, can say. Even Marco Polo, the most charming and, where his religious prejudices or his partiality for the 'Great Khan' do not come in, the most trustworthy of travellers, yet speaks of the Musalmans whom he met everywhere in Central Asia and in China as 'worshippers of Mahommet.'² It is not a little curious that both the English and French languages still bear witness to

¹ B. II. 1. 'Terram idolis deditam.'

² Marco Polo, II. 195, 200, 236. Colonel Yule, in his gorgeous and exhaustive edition of the Venetian traveller quotes, in illustration of the misconception, from Baudouin de Sebourg, where a Christian lady who is renouncing her faith before

the popular misapprehension; the French by the word ‘Mahomerie’; the English by the word ‘mummery,’ still used for absurd or superstitious rites.¹ Nor has a Mohammedan nothing to complain of in the etymology and history, little known or forgotten, of the words ‘Mammetry’ and ‘Paynim,’ ‘termagant’ and ‘miscreant’;² but to these I can only refer in passing.

Saladin is made to say

‘Mahom voel aourer, apportez le moi cha.’

=I wish to worship Mahomed; bring him to me here. Whereupon Saladin commanded

‘Qu'on aportast Mahom; et cell l'aoura.’

He also remarks that even Don Quixote, who ought to have known better, celebrates the feat of Rinaldo, who carried off, in spite of forty Moors, a golden image of Mohammed! In keeping with Marco Polo’s calling Musalmaus ‘Worshippers of Mahomet’ are his other remarks on the subject (I. 70, 74, &c.): ‘Marvel not that the Saracens hate the Christians; for the accursed law that Mahomet gave them commands them to do all the mischief in their power to all other descriptions of people, and especially to Christians. See then what an evil law and what naughty commandments they have! But in such fashion the Saracens act throughout the world.’ Perhaps the best commentary on this is, that Marco Polo himself passed unguarded through almost all Muselman countries, and came out unharmed in and in property

‘Etudes d’Histoire Religieuse,’ p. 223,

In the twelfth century 'the god Mawmet passes into the heresiarch Mahomet,' and, as such, of course he occupies a conspicuous place in the 'Inferno.' Dante places him in his ninth circle among the sowers of religious discord; his companions being Fra Dolcino, a communist of the fourteenth century, and Bertrand de Born, a fighting Troubadour: his flesh is torn piecemeal from his limbs by demons who repeat their round in time to re-open the half-healed wounds. The romances of Baphomet, so common in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, attribute any and every crime to

in early English for any false religion, especially for a worship of idols, insomuch that Mammet or Mawmet came to mean an idol. In Shakespeare the name is extended to mean a doll: Juliet, for instance, is called by her father 'a whining mammet.' See Trench 'On Words,' p. 112. Paynim=Pagan or Heathen. Termagant, a term applied now only to a brawling woman, was originally one of the names given to the supposed idol of the Mohammedans. Miscreant, originally 'a man who believes otherwise,' acquired its moral significance from the hatred of the Saracens which accompanied the Crusades. The story of Blue Beard, the associations connected with the name 'Mahound,' and the dislike of European chivalry in Mediæval times for the Mare—the favourite animal of the Arabs—are other indications of the same thing.

him, just as the Athanasians did to Arius. ‘He is a debauchee, a camel stealer, a Cardinal, who having failed to obtain the object of every Cardinal’s ambition, invents a new religion to revenge himself on his brethren!’¹

With the leaders of the Reformation, Mohammed, the greatest of all Reformers, meets with little sympathy, and their hatred of him, as perhaps was natural, seems to vary inversely as their knowledge. Luther doubts whether he is not worse than Leo; Melancthon believes him to be either Gog or Magog, and probably both.² The Reformers did not

¹ Renan, p. 224. According to Bayle (Dictionary, Art. ‘Mohammed,’) Benvenuti of Imola started this idea.

² See ‘Quarterly Review,’ Art. Islam, by Deutsch, No. 254, p. 296. Cf. Shakespeare’s view of him.

‘The prince of darkness is a gentleman:
Modo he’s call’d, and Mahu’; i.e. Mahound.
and

‘five fiends have been in poor Tom at once: of lust, as Obidicut; Hobbididence, prince of dumbness; Mahu, of stealing; Modo, of murder.’—King Lear, Act III. Scene IV.; and Act IV. Scene I.

As a sample of the controversial works of the theologians of the Reformed Church on this subject, take the following modest title-page of a ponderous work written in 1666:—‘Anti-christus Mahometes: ubi non solum per Sanctam Scripturam, ac Reformatorum testimonia, verum etiam per omnes

see that the Papal party, fastening on the hatred of priestcraft and formalism which was common doubtless to Islam and to Protestantism, would impute to both a common hatred of Christianity, even as the Popes had accused the iconoclastic Emperors of Constantinople eight centuries before.

The language of the Catholic Church, with the accumulated wisdom and responsibilities of fifteen centuries, was not more refined, nor its knowledge of Islam more profound, than was that of the Protestants of yesterday. Genebrard, for instance, a famous Catholic controversialist, reproaches Mohammed with having written his Koran in Arabic, and not in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin, 'the only civilised languages.' Why did he do so? asks he. 'Because,' he replies to his own question, 'Mohammed was a beast, and only knew a language that was suited to his bestial condition!' Nor are some of his other arguments more convincing, however seriously they were meant.

Now, too, arose the invention, the maliciousness of which was only equalled

alios probandi modos et genera, plene, fuse, invicte
solideque demonstratur MAHOMETEM esse unum
illum verum, magnum, de quo in Sacris fit mentio,
ANTI-CHRISTUM.'

by its stupidity, but believed by all who wished to believe it—of the dove trained to gather peas placed in the ear of Mohammed,¹ that people might believe that he was inspired by the Holy Ghost—inspired, it would seem, by the very Being whose separate existence it was the first article of his creed to deny! In the imagination of Biblical commentators later on, and down to this very day, he divides with the Pope the credit or discredit of being the subject of special prophecy in the books of Daniel and Revelation,² that magnificent series of tableaux, a part of which, on the principle that ‘a prophecy may mean

¹ A similar story is told of the great Shamil; only in this case it is Mohammed himself who takes the form of a dove, and imparts his commands to the Hero.

² One of them has even pretended to find in the Byzantine *Mosaics* the number of the Beast (Rev. xii.) thus :—

M	40
A	1
O	70
M	40
E	5
T	300
H	10
S	200

whatever comes after it,' has been tortured into agreement with each successive act of the drama of history; while from another part, lovers of the mysterious have attempted to cast, and, in spite of disappointment, will always continue to cast, the horoscope of the future. He is Antichrist, the Man of Sin, the Little Horn, and I know not what besides; nor do I think that a single writer with the one strange exception of the Jew Maimonides, till towards the middle of the eighteenth century, treats of him as otherwise than a rank impostor and false prophet.

Things did not much improve even when it was thought advisable, before passing judgment, or for the purpose of registering one already passed, to ascend as nearly as possible to the fountain-head.¹ The Koran was translated into French by Andre du Ryer in 1649, and by the Abbe Maracci in 1698. Maracci, the confessor of a Pope, of course dealt with the Koran chiefly from a Romanist point of view: indeed he accompanies

¹ The first edition of the Koran, that of Alexander Paganini, of Brixan, appears to have been published at Venice, about the year 1599, according to some, but about 1515 or 1530, according to others. It was burnt by order of the Pope.—Davenport, *Apology*, part ii, chap. i. [ED.]

his translation with what he calls a 'Refutatio Alcorani,' and a very voluminous and calumnious one it is; and when a certain Englishman, named Alexander Ross, ventured to translate the French version of du Ryer into English, he thought it necessary to preface his work by what he calls 'a needful caveat or admonition,' which runs thus: 'Good reader, the great Arabian impostor, now at last, after a thousand years, is, by the way of France, arrived in England, and his Alcoran, or Gallimaufry of Errors, (a Brat as deformed as the Parent, and as full of Heresies as his scald head was of scurf,) hath learned to speak English.' And one who has probably as much right to speak upon the subject as any living Englishman,¹ after quoting this refined description of the Koran and its author, remarks that, 'though the education of two centuries has chastened the style of our national literature and added much to our knowledge of the East, there is good ground for supposing that the views of Alexander Ross are in accordance substantially with the views still held by the great majority of Eng-

¹ Dr. G. P. Badger, in the 'Contemporary Review' for June 1875; Art. Mohammed and Mohammedianism.

lishmen.' That he is not far wrong, I would adduce as evidence from amongst Churchmen the tone habitually taken by a large part of the religious press when dealing with any subject connected with Islam; and from among Nonconformists the following hymn written by Charles Wesley for 'believers interceding' for Mohammedans, and still, as I am informed, used by some of them at their religious services:—

- The smoke of the infernal cave
Which half the Christian world o'erspread,
Disperse, thou heavenly light, and save
The souls by that impostor led—
That Arab thief, as Satan bold,
Who quite destroyed thy Asian fold.
- Oh may thy blood once sprinkled cry
For those who spurn thy sprinkled blood!
Assert thy glorious Deity.
Stretch out thine arm, thou triune God!
The Unitarian fiend expel,
And chase his doctrine back to hell.'

France and England may, however, in spite of the 'needful caveat or admonition' of Alexander Ross, and the popular misconceptions which are still afloat upon the subject, divide the credit of having been the first to take a different view, and to have begun that critical study of Arabian history or literature which, in the hands of Gibbon and of Muir, of Caussin de Perceval and of St. Hilaire,

of Weil and of Sprenger, has at length placed the materials for a fair and unbiassed judgment within the reach of everyone. Most other writers of the eighteenth century, such as Dean Pri-deaux and d'Herbelot, Boulainvilliers and Voltaire, and some subsequent Bampton lecturers and Arabic professors, have approached the subject only to prove a thesis. Mohammed was to be either a hero or an impostor; they have held a brief either for the prosecution or the defence; and from them, therefore, we learn much that has been said about Mohammed, but comparatively little of Mohammed himself.

It is not unnatural that in some cases extravagant detraction should have given rise to equally extravagant eulogy, and that the Prophet of Arabia should have been, more than once, held up to admiration as almost the ideal of humanity. But this is a length to which it is inconsistent alike with what Mohammed claimed for himself and with recorded facts. These facts are now all or nearly all before us; and what is most needed now is, as has been well remarked by an able writer in the 'Academy,' the mind that can see their true meaning, 'that can grasp the complex character of the great man whose

life they mark out, like a grand but intricate mosaic.'

The founder of the reaction was Gagnier, a Frenchman by birth, but an Englishman by adoption. Educated in Navarre, where he had early shown a mastery of more than one Semitic language, he became Canon of St. Genevieve at Paris; on a sudden he turned Protestant, came to England, and attacked Catholicism with all the zeal of a recent convert. Having been appointed to the Chair of Arabic at Oxford, he proceeded to write a history of Mohammed, founded on the work of Abulfeda, the earliest and most authentic of Arabic historians then known.

The translations of the Koran into two different European languages by Sale and Savary soon followed; and from these works, combined with the vast number of facts contained in Sale's Introductory Discourse, Gibbon, who was not an Arabic scholar himself, drew the materials for his 'splendid chapter, the most masterly of his 'three master-pieces of biography,' Athanasius, Julian, and Mohammed. 'He has descended' on the subject in the fulness of his strength,' has been inspired by it, and has produced a sketch which, in spite of occasional uncalled-for sarcasms and charac-

teristic innuendoes, must be the delight and the despair even of those who have access, as we now have, thanks especially to Sprenger and Muir, to vast stores of information denied to him. But Gibbon's unfair and unphilosophic treatment of Christianity has, perhaps, prevented the world from doing justice to his generally fair and philosophic treatment of Mohammedanism; and, as a consequence of this, most Englishmen, who do not condemn the Arabian prophet unheard, derive what favourable notions of him they have, not from Gibbon, but from Carlyle. Make as large deductions as we will on the score of Carlyle's peculiar views on 'Heroes and Hero-worship,' how many of us can recall the shock of surprise, the epoch in our intellectual and religious life, when we found that he chose for his 'Hero as prophet,' not Moses, or Elijah, or Isaiah, but the so-called impostor Mohammed! ¹

¹Quoted from Rev. R. Bosworth-Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, pp. 63-72, 3rd edn. London 1889.

ISLAM

I said, 'What is Islam?' The Prophet said, 'Purity of speech and hospitality.'

I said, 'And what is faith?' He said, 'Patience and beneficence.'

—Amru b. Abasah.¹

A man said, 'O Prophet of God! what is (the mark of) faith?' The Prophet said, 'When thy good work gives thee pleasure, and thy evil work grieves thee, thou art a man of faith.' The man said, 'And what is sin?' The Prophet said, 'When anything smites thee within thyself, forsake it.'

—Abu-Umamah.²

Islam: Its Significance

THE root *salama*, from which *Islam* is formed, in the first and fourth conjugations, signifies, in the first instance, to be tranquil, at rest, to have done one's duty, to have paid up, to be at perfect peace, and, finally, to surrender oneself to him with whom peace is made. The noun derived from it means peace, greeting, safety, salvation. "The word," says Deutsch, "thus implies ab-

¹ *Sayings*, 217.

² *Ibid.* 207.

solute submission to God's will—as generally assumed—neither in the first instance, nor exclusively, but means, on the contrary, striving after righteousness with one's own strength.”¹

Its Idea of Religion

Mohammed regarded religion as a straight, natural law, for men to follow, wherein was no perplexity or ambiguity;

¹ Cf. Koran, lxxii, 14. “Closely connected,” continues he, “with the misapprehension of this part of Mohammed’s original doctrine is also the popular notion on that supposed bane of Islam, Fatalism; but we must content ourselves here with the observation that, as far as Mohammed and the Koran are concerned, Fatalism is an utter and absolute invention. Not once, but repeatedly and as if to guard against such an assumption, Mohammed denies it as distinctly as he can, and gives injunctions which show as indisputably as can be, that nothing was further from his mind than that pious state of idle and hopeless inanity and stagnation.” Elsewhere the same learned writer says, “It (the Koran) teaches the very contrary doctrine. Mohammed’s whole system is one of faith built on hope and fear. Nor did the word Islam originally betoken that absolute and blind submission which it afterwards came to mean, but rather the being at peace and living in accordance with God’s words and commands, leading the life of a righteous man; in the sense in which the derivatives of the Semitic Salam occur in early Aramaic.”

and he even taught that all the children of men would follow the same straight way were it not for the corrupting influences of their guardians, who consciously or unconsciously set an unnatural example by their way of life for their little folks to follow.¹ Thus early in Islam, Mohammed did away with the baptismal, and in fact all ceremonies in the hands of a designing priesthood. According to Mohammed, religion was the natural bent of a free, unbiased mind, and man the vice-gerent of God on earth in a very real sense,² inspired of his Master to know the good and refuse the evil;³ and only when he refused to follow out the highest and the best and deliberately chose the lower and the worse road did he approximate to the lowest brute.⁴

"Set thou," says the Koran, "thy face steadfast towards religion as a Hanif,"

¹ Cf. *Sayings*, 463.

² Koran ii. 30.

³ xci. 7, 8.

⁴ Ib. 9, 10; xcvi. 1-8.

⁵ One rightly inclined.

the constitution of God whereon He has constituted men; there is no change in the law of God. That is the standard religion, but most men do not know.”¹

“[That is] the baptism of God, and who is better than God at baptizing? Him we serve.² “We are of God, and to Him shall we return.”³

His religion thus stands forth free of all mysteries and articles of faith on dubious subjects.

“And if thou follow most of those who are in the earth, they will lead thee aside from the way of God: they only follow an opinion, and they only conjecture.”⁴

The religion of the former prophets was not a creed-bound dogma but a life of earnest, faithful work: “Do ye say, Verily Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes were Jews or Christians?”⁵

¹ Koran, xxx. 30.

² ii. 138.

³ Ib. 156.

⁴ vi. 116.

⁵ ii. 140.

"Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was a Hanif, a Moslem, and he was not of those who joined others with God."¹

According to Mohammed, men were originally of one religion (which he named *Islam*), and when differences arose amongst them, God raised up prophets in their midst to guide them with truth, and people only differed among themselves out of mere jealousy.²

This was the Mother Religion.³ In course of time, as the wave of propagation flowed in distant age and clime, and humanity split up into innumerable sections and scattered throughout the world, to every people,⁴ in their own tongues,⁵ was conveyed in every age,⁶ this same Divine message of wisdom and of truth,⁷

¹ Koran iii. 67.

² ii. 213.

³ xlvi. 13, 14.

⁴ x. 47; xvi. 36; xxxv. 24.

⁵ xiv. 4.

⁶ xiii. 38.

⁷ ii. 151.

through an endless succession of prophets and seers.¹

It will thus be seen that the Islam of Mohammed is not a new religion: its only work lies in restoring the primitive faiths of the prophets and preachers of bygone ages to their original purity and simplicity. And it is not for the Moslem to ignore any of the great teachers who have long since done their work and retired from this world; he dare not utter a word of disrespect towards them. On the contrary, he is bound to render the greatest deference to each one of them.² Speaking of the prophets of the house of Israel, the Koran says:—

“Say ye, We believe in God, and what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and what was given to Moses and Jesus, and

¹ Koran, xl. 78. It is not a fact that Mohammed taught the finality of his own dispensation.

² iv. 150-52.

what given to the [other] prophets from their Lord—we make no distinction between any of them; and to Him we submit.”¹

And it is not only to Moses and Jesus and Mohammed that the Moslem owes allegiance, but to *all* the prophets of *all* the nations who have appeared in the different ages of the history of mankind. Thus, along with a thousand others, Rama, Krishna, and Buddha, of India, Zarathushtra of Persia, and Confucius of China, have alike a place in the hearts of all the followers of Islam.

Its Idea of Brotherhood

In Islam, all humanity is one vast brotherhood, with God as their Creator and Master who looks upon them all as equal. All the barriers, racial and other, raised against it by the self-interest of man are destroyed, and divisions on the ground of religion merely are not recognized; its teachings being directly opposed to all sectarianism and based on the broadest principle.

¹ Koran ii. 136; iii. 84.

"Ye people!" such was the Divine message which Mohammed brought to his people, "verily WE have created you of a male and a female, and have made you races and tribes, that ye might know one another; but verily the most honourable of you in the sight of God is he who most fears to do wrong."¹

"God looked towards the people of this earth: the Arabs hated the non-Arabs, except the best among them of the people of the book. He says, I have only raised thee up that I may prove thee, and prove [others] by thee."²

"Man is only a pious believer or a wicked sinner."³

"Be ye all worshippers of God and brothers to one another, like as God has commanded you."⁴

Its Exhortation to Unity

And an appeal for reconciliation and

¹ Koran, xl ix. 13.

² *Sayings*, 464.

³ *Ibid.*, 792.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 904.

co-operation in the matter of truth is thus made:

“Say thou, Will ye dispute with us concerning God, when He is our Lord and your Lord, and we have our works, and ye have your works, and we are solely His?”¹

“Say thou, O ye people of the book! come to an equitable word between us and you that we will not serve any except God, nor join anything with Him, nor take each other for lords beside God.”²

“O ye people of the book! be not extravagant in your religion, nor say of God [any other] than the truth.”³

Sectarianism Condemned

“O ye apostles! eat of the good things, and act aright; verily, I know what ye do.

“And, verily, this your religion is one religion, and I am your Lord: so fear Me.

¹ Koran, ii. 139.

² iii. 64.

³ iv. 171.

"But they have cut up their religion, among themselves, into scriptures, each party rejoicing in what is with them."¹

"Thus has God made fair-seeming to every people their work."²

"Verily, those who divide their religion and become sectaries, have thou nothing to do with them -their affair is only with God: and He will inform them of what they have done."³ "They say, Nay! we'll follow whereon we found our fathers. What! and though their fathers had no sense at all, nor were they guided aright?"⁴

"They say, None shall enter paradise except such as are Jews or Christians. That is their fancy. Say thou, Bring your proofs, if ye speak the truth. Nay! whoso submits himself to God and is a doer of good, he shall have his reward with his Lord: there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve."⁵

¹ Koran, xxiii. 51-3.

² vi. 109.

³ vi. 159.

⁴ ii. 170.

⁵ ii. 111, 112.

Exclusiveness Reprobed

Speaking of the over-bearing conduct of some people towards the gentiles, Mohammed thus taught : "They say, There is no obligation upon us in respect to the gentiles: but they utter a lie against God knowingly. . . . These shall have no portion in the hereafter, nor shall God speak to them, nor shall He look upon them on the day of resurrection, nor shall He purify them, but for them shall be a painful torment."¹

And when they justified themselves by their Law, Mohammed said: "And verily there is a party of them who torture the book with their tongues, that ye may take it to be from the book; but it is not from the book. And they say, It is from God but it is not from God; and they tell a lie against God knowingly."²

Its Practical Brotherhood

Thus, to a Moslem this wide world

¹ Koran, iii. 75-7.

² iii. 78.

presents a vast field for co-operation in the struggle of life towards its ultimate goal. His religion leads him to seek the welfare of humanity in the co-operative spirit as it were, rather than in the competitive. He might have no objection in treating with a non-Moslem, for religion is no barrier to him, unless he is checked by the peculiar caste rules of the people he is desirous to approach. He may with a quiet conscience eat and even intermarry with them. Mohammed himself, strictly opposed as he was to the religion of the idolaters, had married three of his own daughters¹ to them, though in the early stormy days of Islam it proved disastrous. His daughters were ill-treated and finally turned out by their unbelieving husbands, who also joined the people in persecuting Mohammed and his followers. When one of them, Abul-As, came over to Mohammed six years later, he allowed his daughter to be united to him under the previous

¹ Zeinab, Rukeiyah, and Umm Kulthum.

marriage—no fresh ceremony or dowry being required¹ Some other idolaters had also Moslem wives,² and their marriages were as plainly recognized by Mohammed as those of Moslems having idolatress-wives.³ I need hardly mention that the marriages of Moslems with Jews and Christians and all who believe in God and His moral government form a part of the Mohammedan Common Law.

This was the practical brotherhood of man that knew no colour, no creed, and which bade men meet on the common platform of humanity, and humanity alone.

All wrangling upon religion was absolutely shut out: -

"The Jews say, The Christians stand on nothing; and the Christians say, The Jews stand on nothing. Yet they read the book. Thus say those who are gentiles like as these say. But God shall judge between them on the day of re-

¹ Ibn Abbas in Abu Daud and Tirmidhi.

² e.g., Safwan and Ikramah.

³ e.g., Ibn Sufyan and Hakim.

surrection concerning that whereon they dispute.”¹ “They say, Be ye Jews or Christians, that ye may be guided aright. Say thou, Nay! but the creed of Abraham, the Hanif, who was not of those who joined [other gods] with God.”²

The Code of Islam

And the code of Islam is thus given:—“Come,” says the Koran, “I’ll tell you what your Lord has forbidden you—that ye join not anything with Him. And be good to [your] parents, . . . and draw not nigh to filthy actions to what appears thereof and to what is hidden; and kill not a being which God has forbidden [you to kill], unless for justice. . . And give full measure and a just balance. . . And when ye speak be just, although it be [against] one who is of kin: and the command of God fulfil ye. That is what He enjoins you, that ye may be mindful. And this is my straight way; so follow it.”³

¹ Koran, ii. 113.

² ii. 135.

³ vi. 151-53.

This was the life according to the Original Religion, and whoso broke from it was regarded as "going astray." In the Koran such people are called an "unjust people" and "transgressors." "But those who do wrong follow their lusts without knowledge."¹

Responsibility of Man

"Will God make those who believe and do the right deeds, like those who do evil in the earth? or will He make the pious like the wicked?"² God's is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth, that He may reward those who do evil with what they do, and may reward those who do good with good."³

"Let them alone who take their religion for a play and a sport, and whom the life of this world has deceived; and remind them hereby that a soul shall become liable for what it has earned

¹ Koran xxx. 29.

² xxxviii. 27.

³ liii. 31.

[of good or evil]: it shall have no patron or intercessor beside God: and if it could atone with the fullest atonement, it would not be accepted from it.”¹

A Life of Work

Islam, above all, is a religion of works. The service of man and the good of humanity constitute pre-eminently the service and worship of God.

“All creation is the family of God, and of all creation the most beloved of God is he who does most good to His family.”²

“God will not be merciful to him who is not merciful to men.”³ “The merciful God is merciful to those who are merciful: be ye then merciful to those who are in the earth, so that He who is in the heaven may be merciful to you.”⁴ “God is always ready to help His worshipper so long as the worship-

¹ Koran vi. 70.

² *Sayings*, 269.

³ *Ibid.*, 511.

⁴ *Ib.*, 508.

per is ready to help his brother."

A selfless life of love is the life of a Moslem. Being asked as to the best part of faith, Mohammed said, "That thou love for the sake of God, and hate for the sake of God, and that thou love for men what thou lovest for thyself, and hate for them what thou hatest for thyself." ²

"Ye shall not believe unless ye love one another." ³

"He has no faith who fulfils not his trust, and he has no religion who fulfils not his promise." ⁴

"By Him in whose hand my life is! no worshipper [truly] believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." ⁵

"Has not God made man two eyes and a tongue and two lips, and pointed him out the two highways [of good and evil]?"

¹ *Sayings*, 1017.

² Ib., 208

Ib., 194

⁴ Ib., 215

⁵ Ib., 214

"Yet he attempts not the steep one! And what shall make thee know what that steep one is?—To free a neck [from the tyrant's yoke], or to feed on the day of famine the orphan who is of kin, or the poor that lies in the dust; then, to be of those who believe [in God] and enjoin steadfastness on each other and enjoin compassion on each other.—These are the blessed people."¹

The essence of religion is declared to be the service of afflicted humanity:

"Hast thou seen him who calls the religion a lie? That is [the man] who pushes away the orphan, and stirs not up [others] to feed the poor."²

And the following is conveyed to a heartless worshipper:

"And woe to those who pray, who of their prayers³ are unmindful, who make a show, and refuse help [to the needy]!"⁴

¹ Koran xc. 8-18.

² cvii. 1-3.

³ Or, duties.

⁴ Koran cvii. 4-7.

Work, and work alone, is the true test of a believer in the sight of God:

"Verily, those who say, Our Lord is God! and then keep straight--there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve;--these are the people of paradise, to dwell therein for ever, as a reward for what they have done."¹

"Verily, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabæans--whoso believes in God and the last day, and does right--they have their reward with their Lord, and there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve."²

Faithful Work

Addressing a larger humanity, Mohammed thus appealed to them to sink their petty differences: "For every people has God appointed rites [and ceremonies] which they observe: let them not, therefore, dispute with thee in the matter."³ "To every one of you has God given

¹ Koran xlvi. 13, 14; xli. 30-32.

² ii. 62; v. 69.

³ xxii. 67.

a law and an open way--and if He had pleased, He would surely have made you one people, but [He has done otherwise], that He might try you in what He has given you respectively. Strive then to excel each other in benevolent deeds; to God is your return altogether, and then will He inform you of that concerning which ye disagree."¹

Earnest Work

The life of the believer, in Islam, is a severe trial: "Do men imagine that they will be left alone to say, We believe, and not be tried?"² "Verily God has bought of the faithful their souls and their wealth."³

"Ye shall never attain to goodness until ye spend [for others] out of what ye love [to possess] yourselves."⁴

Islamic charity, which embraces the widest circle of kindness, is exacting in the minutest concerns of life. "Every good

¹ Koran v. 48.

² xxix. 2.

³ ix. 111.

act,"" Mohammed would say, " is charity."¹ "Thy smiling in thy brother's face is charity; thy bidding what is good is charity; thy forbidding what is wrong is charity; thy putting a man in an unknown land in the right road is charity for thee; thy assisting a man who has a defect in the eye is charity for thee; thy removing stones and thorns and bones from the road is charity for thee; and thy emptying the bucket into the bucket of thy brother is charity for thee."² "Despise not anything good, and speak to thy brother with an open countenance; verily, that is of good acts and kindnesses."³

"The believer dies," said Mohammed, "with his sweat on the brow."⁴ "He is not a believer who eats his fill while his neighbour lies hungry by his side."⁵ "The world is a prison for the believer,

js, 87.

² Ib., 88.

³ Ib., 10.

⁴ Ib., 613.

¹ Ib., 614.

and a paradise for the unbeliever."¹

The Moslem Paradise is declared to be "beneath the shade of swords."² "Hell-fire," said Mohammed, "is veiled by passions, and paradise is veiled by hardships."³

The Duty of Man

And what is the duty of man in Islam?—

"Verily," says the Koran, "God commands justice and the doing of good, and the giving to those of kin [their due]; and He forbids filthy actions and iniquity and transgression."⁴

"When one of you sees wrong-doing," said Mohammed, "let him undo it with his hand; and if he cannot do this, then let him speak against it with his tongue; and if he cannot do this either, then let him abhor it with his heart—and this is the least of faith."⁵

¹ *Sayings*, 6. 5.

² Ib., 995.

³ Ib., 322

⁴ *Koran* xvi. 90.

⁵ *Sayings*, 235.

"By Him in whose hand stands my life! bid what is reasonable, and forbid what is wrong; or He will certainly send against you a chastisement from Him: then will ye call on Him, and He will not answer you."¹

"There is no good in much of what they talk in private, unless [in the talk] of him who bids charity, or what is reasonable, or concord among men."²

"Assist one another in goodness and piety, but assist not one another in sin and enmity; and fear God; verily, God is severe in punishing."³

"And let not the malice of a people provoke you to transgress, but act justly.—it will be nearer to piety; and fear God; verily God is informed of what ye do."⁴

His Free Agency

The free agency of man is throughout maintained: "When they commit

¹ *Sayings*, 238.

² Koran iv. 114.

³ v. 2.

⁴ v. 8.

a filthy action, they say, We found our fathers at it, and God bids us do it. Say thou, God bids [you] not to commit filthy actions. Will ye say of God what ye do not know?"¹

"Say thou, My Lord has only forbidden filthy actions—what appears thereof, and what is hidden—and sin and rebellion without right, and that ye join with God what He has sent down no authority for, and that ye should say of God what ye do not know."²

"Verily, God changes not [His grace] which is in men until they change what is in themselves [by sin]."³

Some Social Questions

Having said something of the general tenour of the reforms effected by Islam in the domain of creeds, sects, and nations, of beliefs many and practices varied, I next come to take a very cursory view of some of the social reforms effected by Islam, beginning with the subject of

¹ Koran vii. 28.

² vii. 33.

³ xiii. 11.

woman, her position, etc., from the Islamic standpoint.

Respect of Woman

"Respect women," is one of the first lessons of Islam. The Koran says: "Ye people! fear your Lord who created you of the same species, and created thereof its mate, and from them two have spread abroad so many men and women. And fear God by whom ye beg of one another, and respect women.¹ Verily God watches over you."²

Her Position

Mohammed called woman, 'the most inestimable thing in the world,' 'the handiwork of God,' 'the mother of men.'

She is by no means any inferior in her social life. "Men are but attendants upon women," says the Koran.³

Her married life is one of the pleasantest in Islam. "Your wives are a garment to you, and ye are a garment to

¹ Lit., wombs; motherhood.

² Koran iv. 1.

³ iv. 84.

them.”¹ “They have [rights against men]; like as [men] have [rights] against them, in reason.”² “Men shall have a portion of what [their] parents and kindred leave, and women [also] shall have a portion of what [their] parents and kindred leave, whether it be little or much; a set portion is theirs.”³ “Men shall have a portion of what they earn, and women also a portion of what they earn.”⁴

Marriage

Marriage, according to the Mohammedan law, is not simply a civil contract, not a social partnership merely, neither an alliance for convenience to be dissolved at pleasure. It is an institution of God, whose foundations are laid and principles fixed and enduring as the human race itself. It is a sacred, “strict bond of union,”⁵ with the object

¹ Koran, ii. 187.

² ii. 228.

³ iv. 7.

⁴ iv. 32.

⁵ iv. 21.

"that ye may confide in them (wives), and that there may be love and tenderness between you."¹

Some of Mohammed's sayings with regard to marriage might be quoted with advantage: "Thou wilt see nothing conducive of love like marriage."² "Matrimonial alliances between families and people increase love more than anything else." "When a worshipper [of God] marries, he perfects half his religion."³ "Marry those whom you will love and who will love you."⁴ "When any of you marry let them meet each other first "⁵ "No marriage can take place without the express will of the woman." "If she consent not, she cannot be married."⁶

Woman's Share in It

Perfect liberty is allowed to a woman who has reached the age of puberty,

Koran xxx. 21.

¹ *Sayings*, 473.

² *Ibid.*, 475.

³ *Ibid.*, 487.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 484-6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 479-83.

to marry or refuse to marry a particular man, independent of her guardian, who has no power to dispose of her in marriage without her consent or against her will; while the objection is reserved for the girl married by her guardian during her infancy to ratify or dissolve the contract immediately on reaching her majority.

Among the conditions which are requisite for the validity of a contract of marriage are understanding, puberty, and freedom, in the contracting parties. A person who is an infant in the eye of the Law is disqualified from entering into any legal transaction, and is consequently incompetent to contract a marriage. A marriage contracted by a minor who has not arrived at the age of discretion, or who does not possess understanding, or who cannot comprehend the consequences of the act, is a mere nullity.

In Islam, the capacity of a woman, adult and sane, to contract herself in marriage is absolute; she requires no guardian, though to supplement a pre-

sumed incapacity of the woman, to understand the nature of the contract, to settle the terms and other matters of a similar import, and to guard the girl from being victimized by an unscrupulous adventurer, or from marrying a person morally or socially unfitted for her, a guardian is generally recommended, such as a mother, an elder sister, or a male member of the family competent enough to act as such. In law, the woman is mistress of her own actions. She is not only entitled to consult her own interests in matrimony, but can appoint whomsoever she chooses to represent her and protect her legitimate interests. Under the law, the guardian acts as an attorney on behalf of the woman deriving all his powers from her and acting solely for her benefit.¹

Some More Questions

While on this subject, I may be allowed to notice the teaching of Islam on

¹ Abridged from Justice Ameer Ali's *Personal Law of the Mahomedans*, in loco.

polygamy, concubinage, divorce, and the system of female seclusion.

I may briefly mention that none of these is included in Islam.

Islam, wherever it found difficulty in the matter of existing society which it could ill afford to ignore, quietly laid down rules, so that when the time was ripe for it, they might from within work out its abolition.

Polygamy

On polygamy, the Koran says:—

“Ye may marry of such women as seem proper for you by twos and threes and fours: but if ye fear ye cannot act equitably, [and ye can never act equitably between women although ye fain would do it,¹ and God has not made a man two hearts within him,²] then one only, or what your right hands have already got; that is the chief thing—that ye be not partial.”³

¹ Koran, iv. 129.

² xxxiii. 4.

³ iv. 3.

Concubinage

Concubinage is distinctly prohibited throughout the Koran.¹

Divorce

Divorce has been strongly denounced by Mohammed as "the most displeasing of men's actions in the sight of God."² The Koran frequently refers such matters to arbitration for reconciliation,³ and thus exhorts them to re-unite: "And if ye hate them, it may be that ye hate a thing wherein God has placed much good for you."⁴

In the Mohammedan law, the wife also is entitled to demand a separation on the ground of ill-usage, want of proper maintenance, and various other causes, but unless she showed some good reasons for demanding the separation, she lost her dowry, as when the divorce originated with the husband (except in case of in-

¹ Koran, xxiv. 32; iv. 25; v. 5.

² Cf. *Sayings*, 179-82.

³ Koran iv. 35, 128.

⁴ iv. 19.

chastity) he had to give up to her everything he settled upon her in marriage.

The Zenana System

Throughout the Koran we have no trace of the Zenana system, by which a woman is entirely withdrawn from the society of men and the freer atmosphere outside her own world of four walls.¹

Decorum

Of course, modesty is a virtue upon which Mohammed laid the greatest emphasis without respect of sex: "Speak to the faithful [among] men, that they restrain their eyes, and preserve their modesty; that will be more decent for them;

¹ In this connexion, it may be interesting to note that in the early days of Islam this was enjoined by Mohammed as a punishment for unfaithful wives:

"And [as to] those of your women who come in for filthy action, bring four witnesses against them from among your sex; and if they bear witness, then keep them in [your] houses until death release them or God make for them a way." (Koran iv. 15.)

This was later converted into "scourging the adulteress and the adulterer with an hundred stripes." (xxiv. 2.)

verily God is informed of what they do.

“And speak to the faithful [among] women, that they restrain their eyes, and preserve their modesty, and display not their embellishment, except what [necessarily] appears thereof; and let them throw their kerchiefs over their bosoms; and let them not display their embellishment, unless to their husbands, or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or the sons of their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, or their women, or what their right hands have possessed, or the male attendants who are not cunning, or children who do not note the nakedness of women. And let them not stamp with their steps so that their embellishment which they hide may be known. And be ye all turned unto God, ye believers, that ye may prosper.”¹

“O Prophet! speak to thy wives and to thy daughters and to the women of

¹ Koran, xxiv. 30, 31.

the faithful that they let down their wrappers over them [when they walk abroad]; that will be nearer for them to be known, and they will not be affronted.”¹

Slavery

Regarding slavery, I can only state that Mohammed looked upon the system as altogether inhuman. He said: “Nothing pleases God more than the freeing of slaves.”²

He enacted a law that slaves should be allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their service, and that in case the unfortunate beings had no present means of gain and wanted to earn in some other employment enough for that purpose, they should be allowed to leave their masters on simply making an agreement to that effect.³ He also provided that sums should be advanced to the slaves from public treasury to purchase their liberty.⁴

¹ Koran xxxiii. 59.

² Cf. *Sayings*, 181; Koran, xc. 13; ii. 177; etc.

³ Koran xxiv. 33.

⁴ iv. 60.

The whole tenour of Mohammed's teachings made this trade of human lives impossible. I could dwell upon it a little longer, but should pass on to the respect for life taught in Islam.

Regard for Life

Wanton destruction of life is considered reprehensible: "There is no moving thing in the earth, nor a bird that flies with its wings, but is a being like to you, . . . to their Lord shall they be gathered."¹

"Whoso kills a sparrow for nothing, it will cry aloud to God on the day of resurrection, saying, O my Lord! such-and-such a man killed me for nothing; he never killed me for any good."²

"There is no man who kills a sparrow, or anything beyond that, without its deserving it, but God will ask him about it."³

"Take not things which have life to

¹ Koran vi. 38.

² *Sayings*, 36.

³ *Ibid.*, 37.

shoot [arrows] at.”¹

The Prophet forbade any living thing, tied up and bound, to be killed.² He also forbade the setting of brute beasts against one another.³ He forbade the striking on the face of an animal and the branding thereon.⁴

Mohammed pardoned and blessed an unfortunate woman for her kindness to a dog that was holding out its tongue from thirst which was near killing it; for she took off her short boot and tied it to her wrapper, and pulled water for it.⁵

He cursed a cruel woman “for her behaviour to a cat, which she had tied up, so that it died of hunger; for she gave it not to eat, nor untied it, so that it could eat insects and reptiles of the earth.”⁶

He denounced the heartless acts of

¹ *Sayings*, 39.

² *Ibid.*, 40.

³ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁵ *Ib.*, 43, 44.

⁶ *Ib.*, 45.

men who burned the abode of ants.¹

He forbade the robbing of eggs from the nests of birds.²

He forbade the capturing of young birds and distressing the mother-bird, and would have them restored to their nests.³ Even the young animals he would restore to their mothers.

The believers are required to look to the minutest details of the comforts of their domestic animals. "Do not cut off the forelock of the horse, for a decency is attached to it; nor its mane; nor its tail, for it is its fly-flap."⁴

The Prophet would feel sorely distressed at the thought of the least neglect of duty towards his dumb and humble servitors. "The Prophet was seen wiping the face of his horse with his wrapper; and, being questioned, said, At night I have had a reprimand from God in regard to my horse."⁵

¹ *Sayings*, 46, 54.

² Ib., 55.

³ Ib., 54, 55.

⁴ Ib., 47.

⁵ Ib., 48.

"Take not the backs of your beasts for platforms."¹"² "I was riding on a resistive camel," says a wife of the Prophet, "and I turned it roughly; whereupon the Prophet said, Thy duty is to be kind."³

The Prophet would go up to any distressed animal, and stroke him, and would enjoin upon their masters kindness against oppression and fatigue.⁴

Mohammed taught that men would be specially judged on the day of judgment with regard to their character to their dumb and humble servitors.⁵

Regarding the human life the Koran teaches: "Whoso kills a being, unless it be for another being, or for evil-doing in the land, it is as though he killed all mankind, and whoso saves one, it is as though he saved all mankind."⁶

Just Warfare

The principle of war is also inculcated

¹ To stand on for any length of time.

² *Sayings*, 51.

³ Ib., 52.

⁴ Ib., 53.

⁵ Ib., 42-8, 50-55.

⁶ *Koran*, v. 32.

in Islam, but it is not, as is generally supposed, directed against *all* non-Moslems because they are non-Moslems, but it is a struggle for principle and in self-defence. Speaking on the subject, the Koran says :—

“What! will ye not fight against a people . . . who begin the fight with you themselves? . . . And what ails you that ye fight not in the way of God, and for the weak among men, women, and children, who say, Our Lord! bring us forth from this city of oppressive people, and give us from before Thee a patron, and give us from before Thee a helper.”¹

“Permission is given to those who are fought against [to fight] for that they have been wronged.”²

A Rule

The following is the rule of an Islamic warfare: “Fight in the way of

¹ Koran ix. 13.

² iv. 75.

³ xxii. 39.

God with those who fight with you, but transgress not; verily God loves not the transgressors. . . . But if they desist, then let there be no hostility, except against the wrong-doers.”¹

The Interpretation

Lest the above might be misconstrued, I quote the following:—

“As to those who have not fought against you for religion, nor turned you out of your homes, God does not forbid you to be good to them and to act justly towards them; surely God loves the just. God only forbids you to make friends of those, who have fought against you for religion, and have turned you out of your homes, and have assisted each other in your expulsion: and whoso makes friends of them, these are the unjust.”²

Religious Toleration

Above all, the greatest religious tol-

¹ Koran ii. 190-73.

² lx. 8, 9.

eration has been inculcated by the Prophet of Islam :—

“Say thou, O ye who believe not! I worship not what ye worship, and ye worship not what I worship; nor will I worship what ye worship, nor will ye worship what I worship—ye have your religion, and I have my religion.”¹

“Abuse not those whom they call on beside God, for then they may abuse God despitefully without knowledge.”²

“Let there be no compulsion in religion; the right way is in itself distinct from the wrong.”³

“And if thy Lord pleased, surely those who are in the earth would believe, all of them. Wilt thou then compel men, so that they may believe?”⁴

¹ Koran cix.

² vi. 108.

³ ii. 256.

⁴ x. 99.

Nor is there any severity in the Islam of Mohammed against the apostates. I quote from the Koran: “O ye who believe, whoso of you apostatizes from his religion, God will surely bring [in his place] a people whom He will love and who will love Him: lowly to the faithful,

Concluding Remarks

I find I have to add a few words more to say that there is no eternal law as regards human actions, that the Divine ordinances which regulate the conduct of men are the results of growth and development, and that the whole world is in a process of evolution.

Mohammed's teaching on the subject is outspoken enough. "For every prophet's dispensation (*naba*), there is a fixed time."¹ "No prophet's following (*ummah*) can forestall their fixed term or put it off; afterwards [when the term is come] God sends His apostles one after another; but so oft as their apostle comes to a people, they call him a liar." . . .² "For every fixed term [only] is there a book [*kitab*, code]: [and then] God blots out [thereof] what He pleases

lofty against the ungodly; who will strive in the cause of God and not fear the obloquy of the detractor That is the grace of God. He gives it to whom He pleases; and God is Vast, Knowing." (v. 54.)

¹ Koran vi. 67.

² xxiii. 43, 44.

or confirms [by subsequent revelations]; and with Him is the Original Book.”¹

“And for every prophet’s following (*ummah*) there is a fixed term; and when their term is come, they shall not put it off an hour, nor shall they forestall [it]. O children of Man! whenever, [therefore,] any apostles come to you from among you, relating to you My injunctions, whoso then shall fear to do wrong and shall act aright, there shall [come] no fear upon them, nor shall thy grieve. But those who shall treat Our injunctions as lies, and shall disdainfully reject them,—these shall be the fellows of the fire: they shall remain therein for ages.”²

Mohammed’s commands and aphorisms therefore which have been called forth by

¹ Koran xiii. 38, 39.

² vii. 34-6.

Even, in the Koran, Mohammed’s advent is said to have happened during “the interval of apostles” (*‘ala fatratim mina’r-rusul*, v. 19.): there have been apostles before him and there will be apostles after him. It should also be noted that Mohammed is called, in the Koran, *Khatama’n-nabiyyin* (a Seal of the Prophets) and not *Khatima’n-nabiyyin* (the last of the prophets). Cf. Koran, xxxiii. 40.

the passing exigencies of the day or related to the circumstances and requirements of a primitive and archaic society, will have to be differentiated from what is permanent and general (such as I have only noticed here) and what was temporary. "Ye are in an age," said Mohammed, "in which if ye abandon one-tenth of what is now ordered ye will be ruined. After this, a time will come when he who will observe one-tenth of what is now ordered will be saved."¹

Sayings, 794.

CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM :

A Comparative Sketch.

Previous Dispensations Acknowledged

Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and

In every age,¹ have We sent an apostle to every nation,² with the language of his people,³ to declare Our signs to them, to purify them, and to teach them the book and wisdom and to teach them what they did not know.⁴ And We made Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in the footsteps of the prophets confirming the law which was before him: and We gave him the Evangel wherein is guidance and light, and a confirmation of

(1) Koran 13. 38.

(2) 10.47 ; 16.36 ; 35.24

(3) 14. 4.

(4) 2. 151.

teach them, the same
shall be called great
in the kingdom of
heaven.¹

the Law which was
before it.¹

Those who believe not in
God and His apostles,
and would make a
distinction between
God and His apostles
and say, We believe
in some and believe
not in others, and
would take a way of
their own, these are
really unbelievers, and
for them have We
prepared a shameful
torment. And those
who believe in God
and His apostles, and
make no distinction
between any one of
them, in the end will
He give them their
reward.²

The Unity of God

The first of all the com-
mandments is, Hear,
O Israel, the Lord
our God is one Lord.²
It is written, Thou shalt
worship the Lord thy
God, and Him only

Your God is one God :
there is no God but
He, the Merciful, the
Compassionate.³ Yet
there are some men
who take to them-
selves lords beside

- (1) Matt. 5. 17-9.
- (2) Mark 12. 28, 29.

- (1) Koran 5. 46.
- (2) 4. 150-52.
- (3) 2. 163.

shalt thou serve.¹
And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.²

For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we of him; ³ one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

God, and love them as with the love of God! But those who believe are stronger in the love of God.¹ God has not begotten a son, nor is there a God beside Him, or every God had surely gone off with what he had created, and some of them had exalted themselves above others.² Were there in heaven or earth gods beside God, both would surely have been corrupted.³

Jesus a Prophet

Then said Jesus unto them, . . . I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.⁵

Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, is only an apostle of God. . . Believe then in God and His apostles, and mention not the Three

(1) Luke 4. 8.

(1) Koran 2. 165.

(2) John 17. 3.

(2) 23. 91.

(3) 1 Cor. 8. 5, 6.

(3) 21. 22.

(4) Ephe. 4. 6.

(5) John 8. 28.

And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.¹

(Trinity). Forbear this, it will be better for you: God is but one God.¹

His Distinction from God

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.²

My Father is greater than I.³

And, behold, one came and said unto him (Jesus), Good Master. . . . And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one that is, God.⁴

I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God and your God.⁵

Christ does surely not disdain to be a servant to God.²

They do certainly misbelieve who say, God is Christ the son of Mary; for Christ said, O children of Israel, serve God, my Lord and your Lord.³

It is not for man that God should give him the book and wisdom and prophecy, and that then he should say to men, Be ye servants of mine rather than of God;—but rather, By ye perfect in knowledge and in works, since ye teach the book and do study. God bids you not to

(1) John 14. 24.

(2) 13. 16.

(3) 14. 28.

(4) Matt. 19. 16, 17.

(5) John 20. 17.

(1) Koran 4. 171.

(2) 4. 172.

(3) 5. 72.

take the angels and
the prophets for
lords. Will He bid
you misbelieve after
that ye have be-
lieved ?¹

His Submission to God

And he (Jesus) prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilst. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he . . . went away again, and prayed the third time, saying in the same words.¹

These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son, that thy son also may glorify thee: . . . and

When God said, O Jesus, verily I will cause thee to die and will take thee up to Me, and I will deliver thee from those who believe not, and will place those who follow thee above those who believe not, until the day of resurrection. Then to Me shall ye return, and I will judge between you concerning that wherein ye disagree.²

And when God shall say, O Jesus, son of Mary, What! didst thou say to men, Take me and my mother for two Gods beside God? he shall say, Glory be to Thee!

(1) Matt. 26. 39-44.

(1) Koran 3. 79, 80
(2) 3. 55.

this is life eternal
that they might know
thee the only true God,
and Jesus Christ, whom
thou hast sent. I have
glorified thee on the
earth: I have finished
the work which thou
gavest me to do. . .
I have manifested thy
name unto the men
which thou gavest me
out of the world: thine
they were, and thou
gavest them me; and
they have kept thy
word. Now they have
known that all things
whatsoever thou hast
given me are of thee.
For I have given unto
them the words
which thou gavest
me; and they have
received them, and have
known surely that I
came out from thee,
and they have believed
that thou didst send
me. I pray for them:
. . . for they are thine.
. . . And now I am
no more in the world,
but these are in the
world, and I come to

it is not for me to say
what I have no right
to; if I had said it,
Thou wouldst have
known it. Thou knowest
what is in me, but I know
not what is in Thee; verily
Thou art the knower
of secrets. I spoke not
to them but what Thou
didst bid me. namely,
Serve God my Lord
and your Lord; and
I was a witness against
them so long as I
stayed amongst them,
but since Thou hast
taken me away, Thou
hast been the watcher
over them; and Thou
art witness over all
things. If Thou punish
them, they are Thy
servants, and if Thou
pardon them, Thou art
the Mighty, the Wise.¹

thee. Holy Father,
keep through thine own
name those whom thou
hast given me. . .
While I was with them
in the world, I kept
them in thy name:
those that thou gavest
me I have kept, and
none of them is lost,
but the son of perdi-
dition; . . . I have
given them thy word.
Sanctify them through
thy truth; . . . that
the world may believe
that thou hast sent
me. . . And I
have declared unto them
thy name, and will
declare it.¹

Righteousness alone Accepted of God

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.²

O ye people, God has created you of a male and a female, and has made you races and tribes, that ye might know one another; but the most honourable of you in the sight of God is the most pious of you.¹

(1) John 17. 1-26.

(2) Acts 10. 34-35.

(1) Koran 49. 13.

this is life eternal
 that they might know
 thee the only true God,
 and Jesus Christ, whom
 thou hast sent. I have
 glorified thee on the earth : I have finished
 the work which thou
 gavest me to do. . .
 I have manifested thy
 name unto the men
 which thou gavest me
 out of the world : thine they were, and
 thou gavest them me ;
 and they have kept thy
 word. Now they have
 known that all things
 whatsoever thou hast
 given me are of thee.
 For I have given unto
 them the words
 which thou gavest
 me ; and they have
 received them, and have
 known surely that I
 came out from thee,
 and they have believed
 that thou didst send
 me. I pray for them :
 . . . for they are thine.
 . . . And now I am
 no more in the world,
 but these are in the
 world, and I come to

it is not for me to say
 what I have no right
 to ; if I had said it,
 Thou wouldst have
 known it. Thou knowest
 what is in me, but I know
 not what is in Thee ; veri-
 ly Thou art the knower
 of secrets. I spoke not
 to them but what Thou
 didst bid me. namely,
 Serve God my Lord
 and your Lord ; and
 I was a witness against
 them so long as I
 stayed amongst them,
 but since Thou hast
 taken me away, Thou
 hast been the watcher
 over them ; and Thou
 art witness over all
 things. If Thou punish
 them, they are Thy
 servants, and if Thou
 pardon them, Thou art
 the Mighty, the Wise.¹

thee. Holy Father,
keep through thine own
name those whom thou
hast given me. . . .
While I was with them
in the world, I kept
them in thy name:
those that thou gavest
me I have kept, and
none of them is lost,
but the son of perdi-
tion; . . . I have
given them thy word.
Sanctify them through
thy truth; . . . that
the world may believe
that thou hast sent
me. . . . And I
have declared unto them
thy name, and will
declare it.¹

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(1) John 17. 1-26.

(2) Acts 10. 34-35.

(1) Koran 49. 13.

Verily those who say, Our Lord is God, and then keep straight, there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve. These are the people of paradise, to dwell therein for ever, as a reward for what they have done.¹

Verily, those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabæans, whoso believes in God and the last day, and does right, — they shall have their reward with their Lord, and there shall come no fear on them, nor shall they grieve. ²

God alone the Judge

Then came to him (Jesus) the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She said unto

What shall make thee know what the day of judgment is? It is a day when no soul shall have power for another soul at all, and the command on that day shall be of God; —the day when

- (1) Koran 46. 13, 14.
- (2) 2. 62.
- (3) 82. 18, 19.

him, Grant that these my sons may sit, the one on the right hand and the other on the left, in the kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. . . And he saith unto them, . . to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but for whom it is prepared of my Father.¹

men shall stand before the Lord of all the world.¹ All shall have grades according to what they shall have done, that God may repay them their works, and they be not wronged.² Is not God the best of judges?³

The Hour known to Him alone

But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.²

They will ask thee about the hour—for what time is it fixed? Say thou, The knowledge thereof is only with my Lord; none shall manifest it in its time but He. It is the burden of the heavens and the earth: it will come upon you no otherwise than suddenly.⁴

Responsibility of Man

But I say unto you, That God made man, and He

(1) Matt. 20. 20-23.

(1) Koran 83. 6.

(2) Mark 13. 32, 33.

(2) 46. 19.

(3) 95. 8.

(4) 7. 187.

every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.¹

knows what his soul whispers to him; and He is nearer to him than his jugular vein.¹ There is no private talk among three, but He is the fourth of them; nor among five, but He is the sixth of them; nor among a number less than that or more but He is with them wherever they be, and on the day of resurrection He will tell them of what they have done.²

Self-sacrifice

Then answered Peter and said unto him (Jesus), Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee: what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That . . . every one that hath forsaken houses or, brethren or sisters or father, or mother, or wife, or

And those who have fled their country for the cause of God, and have been killed, or have died, God will surely provide them with an excellent provision. He will surely introduce them with an introduction with which they shall be well-pleased.³

(1) Matt. 12. 36, 37.

(1) Koran 50. 16.

(2) 58. 7.

(3) 22. 58, 59.

children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.¹

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.²

If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.³

Do men imagine that they will be left alone to say, We believe, and not be tried?¹ Verily God has bought of the faithful their souls and their wealth.²

Ye shall never attain to righteousness until ye spend [for others] out of what ye love [to possess] yourselves; and whatever ye give, surely God knows.³

The Hypocrites

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. . . And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart

And among men are some who say, We believe in God and in the last day; but they do not believe: they would deceive God and those who do believe, but they deceive only themselves, and do not perceive. In their hearts

(1) Matt. 19. 27-9.

(2) 16. 24.

(3) 19. 21.

(1) Koran 29. 2.

(2) 9. 111.

(3) 3. 92.

from me, ye that work iniquity.¹

is a disease, and that disease has God increased to them, and for them is a painful torment, for that they told a lie.¹ They take their oaths for a cloak, and they turn aside others from the way of God; verily, evil is what they do.²

Prophets laughed to scorn

Jesus said, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.²

Whereunto shall I liken this generation? . . . For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.³

Do they wonder that God has inspired a man from among them?³ And the unbelievers say, This is no other than a lie which he has invented. They also say, These are fables of the ancients. And they say, What kind of apostle is this that he eats food and walks through the streets? Why is not an angel sent down to him to be a preacher with him? The unbelievers also say, He

(1) Matt. 7. 21, 23.

(2) 13. 57.

(3) 11. 16-9.

(1) Koran 2. 8-10.

(2) 63. 2.

(3) 10. 2.

is only a man enchant-ed.¹

Inadequacy of Miracles

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given to it.¹ . . .

They say, Why are not signs given him (Mohammed) from his Lord ?² Say thou, I am only a man like yourselves.³ Signs are in the power of God alone, and I am only a plain warner.⁴

And if God had appointed an angel, He should certainly have made him a man too, and then He would have made perplexing for them what they deem perplexing now.⁵ And if God had sent down to thee a book on paper, and they had touched it with their hands still those who believe not would say, This is no other than magic !⁶

(1) Matt. 12. 38, 39.

(1) Koran 25. 4, 5, 7, 8.

(2) 29. 50.

(3) 18. 110.

(4) 29. 50.

(5) 6. 9.

(6) 6. 7.

Say thou, I am not singular among the apostles.¹
 I say not to you, With me are the treasures of God, nor that I know the unseen; nor do I say to you, I am an angel.² I have no power for myself to profit or to hurt, except what God pleases.³ And if they call thee a liar, say thou, I have my work and ye have your work; ye are clear of that which I do, and I am clear of that which ye do.⁴

Justice

Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.¹

Wrong not, and ye shall not be wronged.⁵

Woe to those who stint the measure, who, when they take by measure from others, exact the full, but when they measure to them, or weigh to them, defraud!⁶

(1) Matt. 7. 1, 2.

(1) Koran 46. 9.

(2) 6. 50.

(3) 7. 188

(4) 10. 41.

(5) 2. 279. (6) 83 1-3.

Internal Purity

Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.¹

Draw not nigh to in-chastity, neither openly nor in secret.¹

God will surely punish you for what your hearts have assented to.²

Surely the hearing and the sight and the heart —each of these shall be examined.³

Prayer

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites. . . but when thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, . . and use not vain repetitions.²

Call upon your Lord humbly and in secret, with fear and desire,⁴ and meditate on thy Lord within thine own mind with humility and fear and without loud-speaking.⁵

Woe to those who pray, who in their prayers are careless, who make a show.⁶

Charity

Take heed that ye do Blessed is he who gives

(1) Matt. 5. 28.

(1) Koran 6. 151.

(2) 6. 5-7.

(2) 2. 225.

(3) 17. 36.

(4) 7. 55, 56.

(5) 7. 205. (6) 107.4-6.

not your alms before men, to be seen of them. . . But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth : that thine alms may be in secret.¹

of his wealth in charity, and who offers not favours to any for a recompense, but only as seeking the goodwill of his Lord!¹

If ye display your charity, then well it is ; but if ye conceal it and give it to the poor, it will be better for you.²

A kind word and pardon is better than almsgiving which injury follows.³

Forgiveness

Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.²

Good and evil are not alike : turn aside evil with what is better, and lo ! he between whom and thyself was enmity shall become, as it were, thy warmest friend ; but none can attain to this unless those who patiently persevere ; nor yet shall any attain to this unless he who is endued with great happiness of temper.⁴

(1) Matt. 5. 1-4.

(2) 5. 39.

(1) Koran 92. 18-20.

(2) 2. 271.

(3) 2.263. (4) 41.34, 35.

Paradise is for the pious
. . . who bridle their
anger and forgive men.¹

Whosoever is angry with
his brother without a
cause shall be in dan-
ger of the judgment:
and whosoever shall
say to his brother,
Thou vain fellow, shall
be in danger of the
council: but whosoever
shall say, Thou fool,
shall be in danger of
hell fire.¹

Believers, let not men
laugh other men to
scorn, who may be
better than themselves,
neither let women laugh
other women to scorn
who may be better
than themselves. Nor
defame one another,
nor call one another
names. Evil is the name
wickedness after faith,
and whoso repents not,
such are surely unjust.²

A Prayer

Our Father which art in
heaven, Hallowed be
thy name. Thy king-
dom come. Thy will
be done in earth, as
it is in heaven. Give
us this day our daily
bread. And forgive us
our debts, as we for-
give our debtors. And
lead us not into tem-
ptation, but deliver us
from evil: for thine
is the kingdom, and
the power, and the
glory, for ever. Amen.²

Praise to God, Lord of
all the world. The
Merciful, the Compa-
ssionate. Master of the
day of judgment.
Thee we serve, and
Thee we ask for help;
guide us on the straight
path, the path of those
to whom Thou art
gracious, upon whom
is not Thy wrath, and
who err not.³

(1) Matt. Ib. 22.
(2) 6. 9-13.

(1) Koran 3. 133, 134.
(2) 49.11. (3) 1.1-7..

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